

TEEVADHARA

A JOURNAL OF CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION

RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD

THE POPULATION PROBLEM IN INDIA, 1974 –
A SHORT SURVEY OF FACTS AND FIGURES

Emilio Bruno

FAMILY PLANNING AND HUMAN VALUES

George Lobo

THE DYNAMISM OF THE CHURCH'S TEACHING ON
CONTRACEPTION

Felix Podimattam

METHODS OF NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

Catherine Bernard

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The Fullness of Life

RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD

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Editorial

The population year is just over. It is doubtful whether theological circles in India have given sufficient attention to the moral aspects of the population problem. India is an overpopulated country, and the problems connected with population are nowhere more pressing than in this country.

The present issue of *Jeevadhara* is a modest contribution towards the solution of the dilemmas created by the population question. It tries to provide some guidelines in the light of which the people of God might be able to come to their own meaningful solutions.

Emilio Bruno, the first batsman, opens the game by placing before us some hard facts and figures regarding the population problem in India which he believes should form the basis of any realistic moral thinking on the subject in the Indian context. Modern scientific and cultural progress has radically changed the responsibilities and attitudes with regard to procreation and education of children. The improved standard of health-care has drastically cut down mortality rate. The cost of living and of education has increased astronomically. The length of formal training for participating efficiently in the modern technologically advanced society too has increased. Under these circumstances many families are faced with a life-and-death struggle. We should not add to their pain by our overrigidity.

George Lobo considers the complexity and the magnitude of the present challenge posed by the need for family planning against the background of the genuine values implied in marriage and conjugal life. These values are to be always safeguarded. For this much more than scholastic logic is called for. He advocates a realistic approach which has the courage to subject past concepts and attitudes to an all-round re-evaluation and to ground its solutions on an existential grasp of the various aspects involved.

The sectional editor cautions those who contend that the magisterium of the Church has spoken its last word on the means of responsible parenthood, and consequently there is no room for further discussion, on this point. The teaching of the magisterium on this issue is to be understood dynamically as one that is growing and needs to grow further. Development and growth are a part of human life, and moral teaching is not immune from this phenomenon. There is no teaching in the religious or moral sphere where more could not be said.

Catherine Bernard urges us to pay to the natural methods of family planning the attention they deserve. Most people are not aware of the spectacular advances made by medical science in this area. The natural methods are much more precise and effective than people are often led to think. Definitely they are the best methods from all points of view. They have the explicit backing of the magisterium.

The editor and the contributors of this issue of *Jeevadhara* sincerely hope that the readers will derive some benefit from the articles presented herein. They have no intention of watering down any teaching of the Church. They merely wish to present the Church as a compassionate mother rather than as an exacting tyrant.

St Joseph's Theological College
Kotagiri, Nilgiris.

Felix Podimattam

The Population Problem in India - 1974 - A Short Survey of Facts and Figures

Introduction

Facts and figures are quite relevant to the assessment of morality. Classical Catholic ethics has been deeply concerned with the Natural Law, that is with the relationship of man's behaviour to the world of reality. The Christian concept that man has of himself and the Christian concept of the world are indeed relative.¹ Hence the radical moral task of man is to recognize his given position as the holder of a "political power"

1) *Summa Theologica*, I-II, 95, 1c - Man is naturally inclined to virtue.

I-II, 91, 2c - The Rational Creature is subject to Divine Providence in the most excellent way, in so far as it partakes of a share of Providence, being provident for himself and for others. Wherefore it has a share of the Eternal Reason, whereby it has a natural inclination to its proper act and end, and this participation... is called the Natural Law.

II-II, 120, 1 - Human actions belong to the order of the singular and contingent, which is infinitely varied, and so it is impossible to fashion a rule to cover every case.

II-II, 47, 3 ad 2. - It is because the infinite number of singulars cannot be comprehended by human reason that "our counsels are uncertain". Nevertheless experience reduces the infinity of the singulars to a certain finite number, which occurs as a general rule, and the knowledge of these suffices for human prudence

II-II, 47, 5c. It belongs to prudence to apply right reason to action, and this is not done without a (morally) right appetite. Hence prudence is a moral virtue.

II-II, 47, 3c. - No man can conveniently apply one thing to

over every worldly created reality. Man has the power to modify – by his work – his material and social surroundings; man is bound to start his work from a given historical situation, which heavily restricts the feasibility of any planned modification.

In such a practical situation, the wise man proceeds step by step in his work, for the benefit of himself and of other men. Of course, the motive for such a conduct, that places a

another unless he knows both the thing to be applied and the thing to which it has to be applied. Now actions are in singular matters, and so it is necessary for the prudent man to know both the universal principles of reason, and the singulars about which actions are concerned.

II-II, 47, 14c. – Prudence requires diligence, that one may foresee aright what has to be done.

II-II, 45, 15c. – Intellectual virtue is both originated and fostered by teaching; it therefore demands experience and time. Therefore prudence is in us not by nature, but by teaching and experience.

SPL. 65, 3c – Since, however, human acts must vary according to the various conditions of persons, times, and other circumstances, the aforesaid conclusions (the moral precepts) do not proceed from the first precepts of the natural law so as to be binding in all cases, but only in the majority, for such is the entire matter of ethics according to the philosopher. Hence, when they cease to be binding, it is lawful to disregard them... to. 1: the Natural Law, considered in itself, has the same force at all times and places, but accidentally on account of some impediment it may vary at certain times and places... A dispensation in this matter could be granted by God alone through an inward inspiration... to. 2: Nor is the dispensation thus granted a contradiction to the principles which God has implanted in Nature, but an exception to them, because those principles are not intended to apply to all cases, but to the majority.

II-II, 57, 2 to 1. – That which is natural to one whose nature is unchangeable must need be such always and everywhere. But man's nature is changeable, wherefore that which is natural man may sometimes fail.

heavy burden of responsibility, risk and toil on the agent, is the love and concern for himself and for others, a concern which holds in its structure the reality of the Christian religion.

The authentically concerned Christian is very realistic in his behaviour, because he wants to translate soon into hard facts whatever spiritual impulse he may have to help and improve the lot of mankind. He considers such an impulse a signal grace, and the willing and loving response to this call constitutes his own "moral" life. Of course, this immediate response to the appeal of charity is somewhat sentimental and general, though subjectively radical and theologically essential. The depth and sincerity of such a response can ordinarily be measured by the practical diligence with which the translation into reality is attempted.

Diligence, however, refers to the painstaking toil in the realm of "political power." The reality of facts in a given situation is exceedingly complex, and on this depends a good deal of the toil. When relations of causes and effects are also to be taken into account, the complexity becomes soon overwhelming. Hence the temptation, always present, to escape from the painful mist of reality into the luminous realm of simplistic thinking – be it the magical, religious or philosophical world of make-believe.²

The temptation is heavily compounded if the individual concerned is of a somewhat rigid and proud bent of mind. The constant dependence on facts which endlessly stream and rush

2) Coleman J. C., *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*, III, Tarapovela, Bombay, p. 304 ff.

"It should be emphasized that schizophrenic reactions appear to represent a total defensive strategy rather than simply a conglomeration of individual defences. Unable to establish satisfying and meaningful relationship with the external world, the individual attempts to build meaning and self-identity in a highly personalized and symbolic inner world. But his key assumptions are continually being disconfirmed by discordant feedback from the outer world. An individual can handle a

towards us, always carrying the obscure and unexpected and the exceptional, forces the individual to a constant readjustment of his opinions – on the world and on himself – and of his programmes. A rigid individual may easily crack under such a stress. The unsound remedy to stem the tide of facts is to take refuge in the peaceful realm of the abstract “unchangeable principles”, severing the links with the flux of reality. A protracted exercise of withdrawal may well lead to a permanent state of schizophrenia. Managers and people in authority – forced to take into account facts and more facts – and to act diligently, are the most likely victims of such a clinical condition.

The problem of handling facts and of reading their message is becoming a phenomenon peculiar to our age because of the high density of today’s communication. It is however unthinkable that any responsible person of even average diligence, will deal with the onrushing streams of facts in the way people used to do in a more leisurely age.

The use of modern techniques is indeed compulsory in the field of Ethics also. The fact that the science of statistics is poorly represented – and even less applied – in our moral studies is the consequence of the recent past in our ecclesiastical academic thought – the Neoscholasticism – that went in search of the “immutable essences” after a rationalistic fashion. But, if we accept the classical realistic bent and its interpretation of morality, it necessarily follows that indifference to facts when practical decisions need to be rapidly taken, will be easily construed either as a sign of incompetence – technical or philosophical – or of insincere concern for the well-being of mankind.

certain number of such experiences by ordinary defensive manoeuvres such as denial and repression, but if there are too many for his adjustive capacity, he is faced with the alternative of desperate defensive measures of personality disintegration... In essence, the individual withdraws his emotional involvement from the real world and evolves a fairy system of false beliefs which enables him to distort and assimilate incongruent experiences without undergoing further self-devaluation.

The population problem

Among the many problems of present-day India, few are more pressing and morally relevant than the problem of population. A prudent solution of it requires some initial work of conceptualization and analysis, and such a foundation has to be built on a secure ground of facts and figures.

In August 1947, about 3500 people – politicians, economists, social planners, health experts, administrators – assembled at Bucharest, Romania, for the first World Population Conference. For the first time in history they tried to formulate a global population policy so that human welfare is not endangered by human proliferation.

It is of the utmost importance for the high authorities of the Church – indeed even for the highest – to take into account the facts and figures that are forthcoming. However, even at the present stage, a few reflections on the matter may be useful, mainly related to general questions. Such will be the content of the present article.

Preliminary remarks

1) The more recent surveys and the statistical tabulations to follow, will in no way modify the general assessment of the problem made by sociologists of the past, recent and not so recent³. Consequently, the stance of “waiting for the next results to be publicized” in the effort of substituting for the hard information, the wishful belief that the problem will be solved by itself – with no harm to anybody – is indeed one option, that is, to do away with the required diligence and to do

3) Nagam Aiya Y., *Census of Travancore* 1891. T. II, p. 964ff “the areality of the whole State is 379 sq. miles against 343 in 1875 and 356 in 1881... In the Madras Presidency it is only 248 sqmile. If we exclude from calculation the lakes, mountains and rivers and the uninhabitable and unimprovable hill tracts, the average density for Travancore comes to 609 per sq. mile.”

The censor, not unaware of the theories of Malthus, is worried about the demographic situation of Travancore, in view of the

nothing. But nowhere is it said that sins of omission are less relevant than sins of commission. Nor can some aprioristic reasoning be pressed on nowadays whereby it is assumed that God's loving Providence cannot permit a grandscale disaster⁴.

2) The same can be said about spreading distrust on the work of the technical men - statisticians and demographers. It is indeed easy to point out the errors and the misinterpretations of the statistical data. Demographical sciences are as subject to error as any other anthropological study. But what can be at present the substitute for statistical analysis, done according to the present state of the art, however imperfect? Some personal inspirations? Some authoritative decisions?⁵

sharply improved conditions of the State (health services, political stability, general economy.)

Projecting data of 1891 to the far-away 1991 (cf. pp. 231-416) he foresees an increase of 100% on population, even though he thinks that the usable land cannot exceed 85% of the total, allowing only an increase of 23%.

Emigration to the interland and to the high ranges is well on its way in 1891, opened up by the "new" public roads (cf. p. 294). The hard pressed Syrian community is in the forefront of this internal migration to less favoured lands (cfr. p. 295.)

4) *Manorama Yearbook* 1974 p. 87

Natural catastrophies

Earth quake:	Jan. 23, 1556	Lives lost	830,000 (China)
Vulcanics:	May 8, 1902	„ „	400,000 (W. Indies)
Flood:	1931	„ „	3,700,000 (China)
Epidemics:	1350	„ „	75,000,000 (Europe)
Famine:	1974	„ „	30,000,000? (Africa)

5) See the attack by the octuagenarian expert Colin Clark published, of course, in the *Osservatore Romano* (10/4/74): "I regret to say... that FAO has been responsible for giving the world a great deal of misinformation. This began in the year 1950 when Lord Body-Orr was Director General... he had no knowledge of economics or politics... his statement (about world hunger) was based on a gross statistical error: he has confused two columns in a statistical table! FAO officials were perfectly aware that this statement was incorrect... somewhat

The problem

The sociological dimensions of the population problem have been stated with all the desirable clarity by S. N. Agarwala: "Modern writers... agree with the proposition that population increase in some circumstances may hinder economical and social progress. For instance, shortage of land and other natural resources, of capital, and of trained and qualified manpower may make it difficult to balance expanding production with rapid population increase. On the other hand, it is argued that a large increase of population in some circumstances may be a positive advantage to economic development. It would be so in those countries where large reserves of natural resources remain undeveloped for lack of sufficient manpower or of sufficient markets for large-scale industries. The question as to how population growth affects the material well-being of the masses does not admit of any general answer."

"Population is increasing more rapidly in those regions where economic hardships are maximum. This is because of declining death rates. But the birth rate continues to be as high as ever. The result is a spur of population growth which

later, in 1969, the Director General of FAO, Mr. A.H. Boerma came out with a fresh statement. He said: 'half the population of the developing countries is mal-nourished'... I asked him on what evidence it was based. And he replied, quite happily: 'None'. It was just a statement made without evidence. Some of you may have been looking at the figures published by the Club of Rome... I think you must regret the affront to the reputation of your city from the publication of such extremely erroneous information. I tried to find out from what source they obtained their agricultural advice. I could not do so, but it must be from some very misinformed source... The Club of Rome have also made alarming statements about minerals. The United Nations in 1949 called a conference of geologists... (the estimates) proved to be extremely erroneous... the Club of Rome also forgets that minerals are not used, the elementary atoms remain in existence..." So also the atoms of Mr. Clark's body. Such a clever chap! What a consoling truth for the faithful readers of the O. R. if they don't have to worry about petrol expenses!

surpasses that which occurred in Europe, North America and Oceania during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.... Declining death rate (in Europe).... was brought about by increasing wealth and by improving conditions of the masses. People lived longer because they could afford more wholesome food and because they could live in better housing and sanitary conditions. This relationship, however, does not hold true in the under-developed countries today. This is because mortality in under-developed countries has declined due to various health measures like DDT spraying,.... increasing use of antibiotics, and not because of increased prosperity."

"The rapid rate of population growth combined with lack of industries has resulted in excessive dependence of population on agriculture. Relative abundance of labour encourages use of such methods of cultivation as require much labour to produce a small return. A method of slowing down the growth of agricultural population is to transfer workers from agriculture to other fields of employment... but it is very difficult to develop large-scale industries in a predominantly agricultural country with a low level of income and little capital.... Low per capita income prevents savings and therefore, investment as a substantial part of the individual income is spent on consumption. Scarcity of skilled workers... is another limitation which retards industrial expansion. Huge investments would be required to provide the underdeveloped countries with enough equipment to permit a satisfactory level of output in both agriculture and industry. It has been estimated that roughly 540 billion dollars (1966) worth of equipment would be needed to raise the average output per worker in major part of Asia to the level reached by Japan before World War II."

"The faster the population grows, the more investments are necessary to keep up a given level of per capita production. It may thus be said that population growth affects economic development... in three different ways. First, a high birth rate creates a heavy load of dependent children per adult worker. This makes it difficult to provide children with education which is essential for socio-economic progress. Secondly, falling death rates and high birth rates bring about a rapid increase of population. Large investments must be made to keep the growing number of

workers equipped even with the same equipment per man as they had in the past. Thirdly, because of lack of industries, the population is heavily dependent on agriculture.”⁶

The situation in India (1974) – some data⁷

Of course, it is outside the scope of this article to attempt a detailed examination of the general conditions of India 1974. We can only refer to the data and the elaborations already published, accompanied by a short commentary. No attempt is made to scrutinize the offered data and to construct a critical apparatus. Our simple presentation, I believe, will be sufficient for the general purpose of our article.

We shall consider here the present situation of some of the Key Factors mentioned by Dr. Agarwala. Some complementary factors will be also considered.

A) Population

1) <i>Density per SqKm.</i>	1951	1961	1971
	117	142	178
(Kerala: 549, W. Bengal: 504, T. Nadu: 317, in 1971)			
2) <i>Birth and Death rates</i>	1951-60		1961-70
	B:	41.7	39.9
	D:	22.8	18.1
Survival rate = 1/D:		48.6	58.7
Growth rate	G:	18.9	21.8
3) <i>Age structure</i>	0-19	19-50	50 +
1931:	49.4	41,-	9.6
1971:	50.7	37.2	12.1

6) S. N. Agarwala, *Population*, New Delhi, 1967.

7) Cf. *India*, A Reference Annual, Publications Division, Government of India, 1965 and 1974. Some elaborations of the data has been necessary for the sake of integration.

B) Production

4) <i>GNP Index</i>	1951	1961	1969	1972	Crores at
	NA	100	129.9	145.8	1960 prices

5) *Land*

Area Foodgrains	97.	NA	124.	122.
Production MTons	51.	NA	NA	104.
Tractors	1956:	21,000	1966:	53,000

6) *Irrigation and Power*

With the possibilities of diverting the normal flow of rivers into irrigation canals having been almost exhausted, effort is now directed at impounding by dams the surplus river flows.

Energy generated	1960	1972
Crores Kwh:	2.012	6.700
Per Capita consumption:	38	94

7) <i>Industrial production</i>	1951	1960	1961	1966	1972
Index:	54.8	100	109.2	153.2	199.4

8) <i>Minerals: Rs. Crores</i>	89.2	NA	181.2	NA	471.1
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9) *Transports*

Rails: Goods	930	NA	1562	NA	1978 LakhTons
Roads:	400	NA	727	1064	1287 Km. 1000

C) Finances

10) *Expenditure on Agriculture*

III Plan	IV Plan
1961-66	1969-72
Rs. 1089	1349 Crores

11) *State Plans Outlay*

	III Plan	Annuaals	IV Plan
	1961-66	67-68	69-74
Agriculture:	972	779	1426
Irrigation:	655	446	1050
Power:	1139	970	1919
Industry:	208	146	312

D) Socials

12) Wages	1951	1961	1962	1964	1966	1970
Factory workers Index	95	100	106	120	139	180

13) Commodity Prices Index	1951	1961	1968	1970	1973	April
Wholesale. Food: NA	100	197	204	257		
All items	94.4	100	165	181	223	

Recent literature seems to concur with our views. The *Manorama Yearbook 1974* reports: "The Economic Survey (put before the Parliament) for 1973-74 paints a gloomy picture of the economy: it says: The Indian economy has been under considerable strain in 1972-73. To a considerable extent, the economic strains of 72-73 reflect the rather unsatisfactory growth of commodity production in 1971-72. Agricultural production which increased by 7.3% in 1970-71, declined by 1.7% in 71-72. Food production declines from 108.4 million tonnes in 71-72 to 104.7 MT in 72-73. The index of industrial production registered an increase of only 4.5% over the year." (p. 371)

"The steady degradation of small and medium cultivators all over India into landless agricultural workers or unemployed hands is brought out by the 1971 Census.

	1971	1961
Cultivators	99.5 mills	78.7
Workers	31.5	47.3

Land reform It will be seen that even if only two acres are allotted to each family, there will be a large number of people without any land. Even a lower minimum of one acre will not meet the demand.

The Estimates Committee of the Parliament... has pointed out that (land) fragmentation has been accentuated as a side-result of the redistribution of land. It has urged the Government to... prevent fragmentation...

The landless workers, who are now being promoted as petty land-holders, will repeat their process of degeneration... and turn into landless workers, once again." (p. 382)

The Green Revolution "The long-term strategy of increased production ran aground in 1973...

For 25 years India has been planning to release agriculture from the stranglehold of weather. The Green Revolution brought a break, or so it seemed. But it turned out that it could not survive the weather, either. Besides, it brought in other troubles of its own. Of five high yielding crops, wheat alone showed some signs of endurance. Rice, Jowar, Bajira and Maize showed themselves dangerously vulnerable to pests and diseases and highly sensitive to water supply. They remain extremely risky crops." (p. 386)

"Despite an expenditure of over Rs. 100 crores during the last 25 years to educate the farmers, the bulk of the Indian agriculture remains untouched by science." (p. 390)

Power Supply "In 1972-73 India faced the biggest power shortage since Independence. The official reasons given are 1) reduced power supply from hydel stations, owing to shortage of rains, 2) the low output of the Tarapur Nuclear power plant, 3) the increase of demand for electricity." (p. 405)

Unemployment "The problem of unemployment has been growing over the last 20 years. The Reserve Bank says: 'In none of the Plan periods, employment opportunities could be created to absorb even the new entrant to the labour force, leading to progressively rising backlog of the unemployed'. C. Subramaniam said (in the Lok Sabha) that about one fifth of the educated population was jobless." (p. 447)

The Sunday Standard magazine, April 21, 1974 reports: "India's population is the second largest in the world, while per capita income of its people is among the lowest in the world. More than half of its population is under 18 years of age, and one out of every five is under six. A population made up largely of children and dependents means more consumers than producers. The Government has calculated that its annual population increase pushes up national needs by 12,500 more schools, 400,000 more teachers, 2.5 million dwellings and 4 million jobs each year."

An assessment

The situation of India in 1974, as can be easily assessed from available data is far from promising. 1) India of 1974 cannot be classified among the countries which can obtain any positive immediate advantage from an increase of population. Although India is presumed to have a fair share of reserves in natural resources, they remain unexploited not for lack of manpower or market, but for shortage of land, of capital and of trained and qualified manpower. Time also is in very short supply, as exploitation of natural resources require a long take-off period, during which the capital is tied down with little or no return.

2) The single most important cause of the hardships in India is the rapid decrease of the death rate (not the increase of birth rate, which is actually declining) from 22.8% during the decade 1951 - 60 to 18% during the decade 1961 - 71.

The growth rate is such that every 10 years not less than 100 million people are added to the present total. Existing social structures can hardly stand such pressure, and are, one by one, put on a state of crisis. The growth rate, in spite of various efforts, is increasing. As health facilities are going to be made more easily available with the general improvement of transport and education, the growth rate will go on increasing in the next few decades, until the diminishing return of health measures on the older section of the populace will balance off with the actual trend of diminishing birth rate. Eventually the prevalence of the old over the young will affect very deeply indeed the life-roles and the self-images of the Indian people introducing them to a "new culture".

As the death rate has been relatively very high for children and old persons, it follows that a sharp drop of the death rate causes a sudden increase of their number. These two classes of persons are mostly unproductive and are dependants; consequently not only do they not produce what they consume, but are tied down to unproductive (immediately) job, qualified manpower and capital. It may be noted that more than half of the population is under 18 years of age, and 15% overaged.

But children grow older, ever swelling the number of hands entering yearly in the work market and there is no corresponding increase in the number of jobs to engage them. Low productivity work - with low capital outlay - is still somewhat available in agriculture, but affords naturally a low income, which tends to become even lower because of overloading of personnel and lower returns of production due to soil exhaustion. High productivity work involves great capital outlay, but affords an insignificant number of high-skilled jobs. Hence unemployment becomes acute causing untold hardships to too many. Social unrest and criminality rise. Nor can industry be expanded, even if capital is available, to absorb the unemployed. High industrial production needs a proportionate consumer market of industrial produces. The Indian populace today has not money enough to buy.

Among the social structures, the most easily assessed is the one related to production of material goods. Such a structure is surely under great stress. With regard to agriculture, the area under crop (excluding forests) is already more than half of the total physically available land. Expansion of the sown area seems to be impracticable, except in a marginal measure, if ecological balance is to be kept for the future. Investment in expansion ventures seems, therefore, to offer little hope for a substantial return. Improvement of the present production by way of better quality is economically feasible - the green revolution. Here it seems that the measures taken by the Indian Government have succeeded to a remarkable extent. Production of grain has doubled from 1951 to 1972. The cost in investment, however, has been very high, as the data on Finances show. Agriculture and irrigation swallowed up Rs. 5328 crores from the States and Rs. 2438 crores from the Centre, in 1961 - '74.

The case of industry is far more encouraging, for here the returns on investment are far speedier. Production has increased fivefold from 1951 to 1971. However, owing to the difficulties of the money-market and the restricted purchasing power of the citizens, further expansion even at the same rate can scarcely be expected for the next decade.

In consequence, to the individual citizen food costs more, housing is scarce and will go more crowded. The worker sees

the increase in commodity prices run much faster than his wages. Things, it seems, are not going to improve soon.

A comparison with the West and Japan

The main shock of the population explosion in the West was felt during the period 1850-1930. The per capita income at the beginning of the period can be considered close to the level at which it stands in India today. The West (and Japan) solved the problem in one or more of the following ways:

a) Emigration to America at the time almost bare of indigenous population. b) Speedy formation of capital by ruthless exploitation of the lower strata of the populace - negro slavery in the Americas, exploitation of workers in the West or, as in the USSR, with slave labour camps and "forced" production rates. c) Colonialism - a variant process of capitalism centred on the exploitation of the natural resources of aliens, accompanied by the holding of "slave markets" in the colonies for the sale of overflowing production at high prices.

It is evident that scarcely any of the methods employed by the West and Japan could have been availed of by India in 1974. Emigration in substantial measure to the few remnant "empty places" is barred now. Local governments resist immigration for the sake of protecting the local population against a possible future "baby boom". Large-scale social exploitation of the poor and the poorest is unthinkable nowadays, given the democratic system of government and the social and political habits now almost universal. The colonial system is a thing of the dead past, as the recent oil crisis has shown. Easy communications and international competition have discouraged the system of "protected slave markets" abroad. Population limitation by controlling birth seems to be the only alternative practically left.

By now, I believe, the point has become clear. No amount of planning can avoid a great deal of general discomfort and suffering. What is taking place is a change of civilization, nothing less. If nothing is done, the crisis will only get worse and less manageable. Too little or too late will not do. If some-

thing is done, quickly enough, a lot of discomfort and suffering, mostly man-made, will be reduced. The relevant question is: what will be, at the end of the process, the accumulated suffering to the individual? Will he be able to bear the process? What about the side-effects, evil and permanent? One instance: will governmental dirigism, with higher taxes and less individual freedom to act and to think, be the end side-effect of a more balanced diet for the millions?

By way of conclusion let me say that, though dramatic at present (1974) and for the near future, the situation of India is not desperate. The death-rate cannot go on falling for too long and will be soon somehow stabilized. The next 20 years are the crucial ones, years of suffering and confusion. Let no one add to such pains by lack of diligence and unreasonable rigidity.

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Family Planning and Human Values

Cooperation in God's creative activity

So far the debate among Catholics regarding family planning has turned too much on the morality of different means. While this has its own importance, there are much wider and more significant issues. What is ultimately at stake is the *quality of human life* and the *development of human values* like freedom, respect for the human person, marital love, etc.

According to the Judeo-Christian tradition, God has given man dominion over the whole of creation. "God created man in his own image" (Gen 1:27), i. e., made him share in His own creative activity. The blessing of fruitfulness is directed to mastery over the whole world (Gen 1:28). Hence it is the vocation of man to render glory to God by transforming the whole of creation. Man has received the sacred trust to exercise mastery over everything. By imprinting his personality on the world by free action he imprints the image of God.

This original purpose of God becomes more manifest in the incarnation whereby the Son of God has assumed human nature and thereby has drawn the whole of creation into His own life and purpose. Christ "is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible" (Col 1:15). Thus Christ has radically liberated man from blind fatalism and made him an intimate cooperator in God's creative and redemptive purpose.

Until recently this stewardship was exercised mostly over external reality. But recent developments have led to the possibility for man of determining his own inner nature and future. The science and art of psychology have made it possible to delve into the mysteries of man's personality and modify his character for better or for worse. Modern physiology, biology and genetics are

opening the way to the mastery over generative processes by which new human beings come into existence. At the same time the need for regulating the reproductive power of man is being increasingly felt owing to social and economic factors. Hence we are faced with the tremendous and complex problem of family planning and, on a wider basis, of demographic control.

Responsible parenthood

Traditional man was awed by the mysterious powers of life and sexuality. He enveloped the processes and events concerning the transmission of life with sacred rites implying deep respect and fear. No doubt there was a positive aspect in this attitude. But it also implied a certain fatalism from which even Christians have not escaped. Often there was a hush-hush stance or the feeling that the matter of new life was best left to some vague 'providence'. There were also strong reasons to wish for numerous progenies when the earth was thinly populated and the scourges of famine, epidemics and wars periodically took their heavy toll. Factors like the need for male offspring to observe the funeral rites of the parents, and the respect that accrued to women who bore sons also contributed to the desirability of having many children.

When the need for limiting births arose, the approach of the Malthusians or the first votaries of family planning did not help. They often spoke negatively in an apocalyptical tone of the impending doom resulting from the rise of population and proposed programmes of action with little respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual person. As it has been humorously expressed, they appeared to stand for a 'birth control' in which there was 'neither birth nor control'! They provoked a strong reaction among traditionalist circles who resisted the very concept of family planning.

Against these extremes, the genuine Christian position is *responsible parenthood*. After some initial hesitation, this has been strongly affirmed at the highest level by the Catholic Church. Vatican II declared that parents will fulfil their task with "human and Christian responsibility" (Const. on Church in the Modern World, n. 50, c). Even the encyclical of Pope Paul VI on Human Life, which is often considered as too traditional,

makes this point in no uncertain terms. "Conjugal love requires in husband and wife an awareness of their mission of 'responsible parenthood', which today is rightly much insisted upon" (N. 10).

It is a pity that there are still in the Church those who do not accept the concept of responsible parenthood. They should realize that the command of God 'to increase and multiply' (Gen 1:28) is to be fulfilled responsibly as befits those whom God has made to His image. They should also have the openness and courage to face the truth and not seem to say: "Don't tell me the facts; they stop me from thinking!" According to reliable estimates, the present population of nearly 4 billion, at the current rate of increase, will be doubled in 30 years. Out of the annual increase of 68 million, 50 million every year swell the ranks of the poverty-stricken. What this means in terms of gross under-nourishment, shortage of educational, health and recreational facilities, inhuman housing conditions, unemployment and so on, is difficult to describe. These colossal problems should shake anyone out of complacency.

Population means people

Hence the most basic question is that of respect for the human person, whether it is that of the parents or of children. The parents, even if illiterate, should not be treated in managerial, manipulative or proprietary terms by those who predetermine targets of population control. Any form of coercion cannot be justified since it will not be conducive to the goal of a sane population policy which is to improve the quality of free human life. As regards children, there should be no negative attitude to new human life. Statements like "birth control is cheaper than babies" betray a materialist and mechanist view of life. A negative approach to birth control either leads to abortion which is killing of innocent unborn human beings or, what is worse, to bringing forth children that are unwanted and unloved. One may wonder whether the increasing number of rejected children may not arise largely from a negative attitude to human life. Human existence is a good in itself; the individual person contains within himself his own justification and reason for existing, quite apart from any 'utility' which he may have for society. So no one has a right to reject one who has already come into existence. But this

same consideration points to responsibility for causing a human being to come into existence in abject misery and thus contributing to the general deterioration of human society. Here there is a delicate balance to be struck between careful regulation of procreation and at the same time unconditional acceptance and respect for every human being that is already existing.

Decision belongs to the parents

The family is the basic cell of society. It is through and within the family that a child is born. If the families are happy, the nation and humanity will truly prosper. Hence the responsibility for regulating births primarily belongs to the family. As Sri G. S. Pathak, the former Vice President of India, remarked at the International Conference on Population Growth and Human Development, "we must seek and find *human solutions* to the population problems which are essentially the problems of ordinary men and women who have their own private histories and recognisable identity as members of a family group and are situated in a particular cultural environment. While planning to solve the population problems it is necessary to remember that we are not dealing with things but with men and women, and must never forget this crucial fact even though we may be tempted to do so when population data are presented as impersonal statistics."¹ Vatican II affirms this idea emphatically: "In view of the inalienable human right to marry and beget children, the question of how many children should be born belongs to the honest judgement of parents. The question can in no way be committed to the decision of government." (The Church in the Modern World, N. 87, d) While the parents must be given every chance of exercising their responsibility, the Council also recognizes the role of government in informing married couples of the condition and needs of the nation (N. 50, b). Hence means of informing and influencing couples which are decent and do not amount to coercion are fully in order.

Public authorities and social agencies must carefully study population trends and availability of minimum resources for a

- 1) Report edited by Anthony A. D'Souza and Alfred De Souza, New Delhi, Indian Social Institute, 1974, pp. 12-13.

happy life. They must seek to convey the information to families in an effective and, at the same time, respectful manner. They must foster the conditions in which free and responsible decision is possible. For this, there is need for raising the level and quality of general education. It has been definitely established that raising the standard of life motivates the couples to plan their family while those living in a miserable and subhuman state have neither the insight nor will to do so. But this point must be carefully evaluated. A one-sided craze for material prosperity in what is called consumer society only leads to the cornering of resources by a section of society as well as to a negative attitude to human life. The present ecological and energy crises should have brought home the lesson that what should be inculcated is not a blind desire for ever-increasing material progress but a moderate standard that promotes the deeper values of life.

Some of those who are impressed by the urgency of the population problem might be impatient of any talk of responsible parenthood and tend to propose drastic coercive solutions like compulsive mass sterilization. But studies made in India and elsewhere have demonstrated that unless voluntary cooperation of the people is enlisted such apparently easy solutions will not succeed. When people in an area are not sufficiently motivated, they put up a strong resistance to any family planning programme. Statistics of vasectomies and insertion of loops mean little since a very large number of operations are recorded that never took place, the sums of money provided by the government as incentives being conveniently divided among interested parties! In order that people accept voluntary limitation of their families, the overall population problem must clearly appear to affect them immediately. Mere global statistics do not impress the ordinary man. Hence a lot of patient work in gradually changing the attitude of the people has to be done. The animators of family planning must come down to the level of ordinary people so that what they say may not seem to be something imposed from above but to be something which is in the interest of the people's individual and family lives.

Vatican II has suggested the norms according to which a couple should come to a responsible decision. "They will thoughtfully take into account both their own welfare and that of their

children, those already born and those who may be foreseen. For this accounting they will reckon with both the material and spiritual conditions of the times as well as of their state of life. Finally, they will consult the interests of the family group, of temporal society, and of the Church herself." (N. 50, d) The decision is to be made with deep reflection and in a prayerful atmosphere as it concerns the most vital interests of the family, concerned and of society at large. Spiritual advisors can guide the couples but should not impose a solution.

Role of the woman

When it is said that the couples themselves should make the decision, it obviously means that husband and wife should do so by a joint effort. To facilitate this, equality between husband and wife is indispensable. Often women realize better the need for avoiding or postponing another pregnancy since it is they who have to bear the child and nurture him for the most part. But often they have no real say in the matter in a society dominated by men. At times a pregnancy is imposed on even an unmarried woman by the inconsiderate or violent action of a man. There is no possibility of family planning in a truly human and responsible way unless the woman is emancipated from her inferior and dependent position. The attitude of men should change radically. They have to shed their feeling of superiority and abandon the view that the woman is an object of pleasure or is only meant to do their bidding. It is very urgent to raise the standard of female education at the intellectual, emotional and moral level.

Just as the child is the fruit of conjugal union and a powerful bond that unites husband and wife, so the common deliberation whether it is advisable to have another child should deepen the love and rapport between them. The decision regarding the next pregnancy should never be imposed by the husband on the wife or it should not happen that the husband acts most irresponsibly, say, by having intercourse in a drunken state, leaving his partner to face the consequences. It should not happen that she has unilaterally to go in for sterilization or adopt some other means as 'a protection' from the inconsiderate behaviour of her husband.

Procreation— fruit of sexual union

According to the divine plan for procreation, new human life results from sexual intercourse or the act that is most specific to the marriage union. Hence the right approach to family planning has to consider the nature and significance of this act and its place in the total marital relationship. For those with a mechanistic view of population control, the sexual union has not much human or personal significance. They are only bothered about the numbers game, whether the population is increasing or decreasing according to their criterion. Traditionalists have generally a rather negative attitude to sexuality. They tend to think that there is something undesirable if not evil in it, but that it is excusable for the purpose of procreation. They are also too preoccupied with the physical integrity of the act. They think that, if this is not violated, then the act is permissible. They do not sufficiently emphasise the significance of the act as an expression of love and the need for making it in fact a sign of mutual love between the partners.

Vatican II has presented the genuine doctrine of the Church regarding sexual union. "This (conjugal) love is uniquely expressed and perfected through the marital act. The actions within marriage by which the couple are united intimately and chastely are noble and worthy ones. Expressed in a manner which is truly human, these actions signify and promote that mutual self-giving by which spouses enrich each other with a joyful and a thankful will" (N. 49, d).

Hence it is very important that the sexual act be not looked upon as a mere technique for pleasure or for procreation. Its deep human dimension must be recognized.

On the one hand, the possibility of self-control must be noted. Sexuality in man is not a mere instinct but an attraction that can and ought to be under reason and the will. It should be progressively drawn into the sphere of love that is generous and self-giving. It is not in the frequency of intercourse as such that the couple find their mutual fulfilment but in the quality of love of which it is the expression. On the other hand, the consequences of too great abstinence must be weighed. Vatican II has frankly

noted this point. "This Council realizes that certain modern conditions often keep couples from arranging their married lives harmoniously, and that they find themselves in circumstances where at least temporarily the size of their families should not be increased. As a result, the faithful exercise of love and the full intimacy of their lives are hard to maintain. But where the intimacy of married life is broken off, it is not rare for its faithfulness to be impaired and its quality of fruitfulness ruined. For then the upbringing of the children and the courage to accept new ones are both endangered." (N. 51, a) Hence total or periodic continence should not be lightly suggested as a means of family planning without examining all the consequences thereof for the particular partnership.

Means of family planning

The morality of the means used for avoiding pregnancy is not irrelevant from the integrally human standpoint. Here there is a double aspect. On the subjective level, the method must preserve the dignity of the spouses and not hinder their mutual love. For this it is very important that the method is chosen with full mutual agreement. There should be no difficulty in everyone agreeing on this point.

But on the objective level there is serious difference of opinion. Some sincerely consider all methods as such morally neutral, the actual morality depending solely on how the couple approach the method and how it affects their relationship. The teaching authority of the Church has in recent years constantly and firmly affirmed that the use of any method (artificial contraception or interrupted intercourse) which blocks the natural dynamism of the marital act towards procreation is a disorder. Unfortunately, this view has often been presented in a too mechanistic or biological manner so that it seems to go against a person-centred approach to morality. It could also be presented in a more personalistic way by trying to show how there is an objective restriction in mutual self-giving when the full dynamism of the act of union towards fruitfulness is vitiated by positive interference, though this might not be accepted by all. But, in any case, the objective disorder in contraception should not be so pressed as to conclude that every use of contraceptives is always

concretely a sin. It can happen that in a conflict situation, it is the lesser evil. While according to the Magisterium, there is an obligation to leave each marital act open to life, there is also the objective obligation to see that the family is not gravely harmed by an undesirable pregnancy. Recent moral reflection has shown that a moral decision has to be made taking all the human values involved into consideration. Often we are faced with conflict situations which cannot be solved by merely looking at one side of the matter.

According to the teaching of the Church, the use of the Natural Method is in itself not a disorder since here there is no objective blocking of the dynamism of the marital act towards procreation. Some recent experiences have shown that this view is not without its practical sense. Contraceptive techniques, apart from their technical limitations in each case, have not proved the panacea that they were proclaimed to be. Many, especially among women, have found that they have their strong psychological disadvantages. A good many women have felt that they were being used rather than loved in contraceptive intercourse and hence the question arises whether this is entirely due to the subjective bad disposition of those who have adopted these methods.

On the other hand, the Natural Method, when practised with mutual understanding, has proved to be maturing and cementing experience. One of the authorities on this matter states: "As the partners mature in their love with the passing of years and the growth of their family, the physical act of intercourse comes more and more to express and nourish the love of the husband and wife for each other, and the inclination for intercourse to be determined by the desire of each to serve the happiness of the other and the good of the family. Periodic restraint of the desire for physical self-gratification now not only intensifies the delight of intercourse subsequently, but makes the act more truly expressive of this unselfish love. A generous abstinence from intercourse for the sake of the other, though desire be strong, has a beneficial effect on the marriage, preserving, strengthening and deepening conjugal love. In some marriages the refreshment provided by this self-denial is not merely

beneficial, it is an indispensable condition for peace and happiness."²

Still, it must be recognized that the Natural Method might put an excessive strain on the partnership, especially when it is technically not secure in the particular case or when both spouses are not sufficiently motivated. Then it would not do to say that using any other method would be necessarily sinful. The teaching of the Church on contraception must be understood as the upholding of a human value, viz., that of openness to life, and it is not to be made into a rigid principle neglecting the realities of life.

Population control and development

The regulation of population growth must be a factor in the integral effort to bring about the good of human persons that people the earth. It should never become an escape from other pressing tasks like social and economic development. We have also noted that overall development is normally necessary to motivate couples to undertake voluntary family planning. Besides, mere diminishing of numbers will not bring about a happy life. Every effort should be made to raise the educational, economic and social standards of families, nations and the whole world.

A country can be said to be overpopulated only in a relative sense, viz., with reference to the resources actually available to sustain in a decent manner the existing number of people. But the potential resources of the earth are still very immense. The problem is of properly exploiting them and distributing them. Even poor and densely populated countries like those of South Asia could have vastly more than the present population. But not only do the primitive methods of agricultural and industrial production stand in the way, but the out-dated and neo-colonial structures positively hinder any progress. A small number of people control all the levers in the country by means of business monopolies, manipulation of political life, a beaurocracy subservient to vested interests, and an antiquated legal structure. The interconnections between the various arms of the vested

2) John J. Billings, *The Ovulation Method*, Melbourne, Advocate Press, 1972, p. 37

Interests are so compact that mere protests or even the normal electoral process can make hardly any dent in their armour. Such a situation spawns every kind of corruption at every level and frustration among the masses. The very moral fibre of nations seems to be affected. An energetic and multipronged attack on this conspiracy of evil alone can bring about the required radical transformation of structures that is the crying need, unless the way is to be paved for a violent revolution.

The monstrous hydra of vested interests in a poor country does not function in isolation. It is but the extension of international neo-colonial forces. International monopolies, backed up by the diplomatic pressure of some rich nations, and ultimately by their mighty armies, ruthlessly exploit poor nations! While the pretence of 'aid' is going on, every year more money is being taken out from some poor countries than what comes in the form of loans and investments. Iniquitous trade relations drain their resources and make them more and more dependent on the mercy of the very same exploiters even for basic requirements like food.

A few years ago the so-called 'Green Revolution' raised a new hope of progress in poor thickly populated countries. But the effects of this genuine breakthrough are not fully realised for lack of inputs like fertilizers. It has been estimated that 4 billion dollars a year for seeds, fertilizers and pesticides and another 4 billion for infrastructure of agriculture i.e., roads, credit and storage would be needed to make the Green Revolution a success in developing countries.³ Compare this with the outlay on armaments in the world's two most powerful nations, which is over 150 billion dollars a year. A few thinly populated countries are deriving an annual profit of over 100 billion dollars through oil. But their own people profit rather little, and other poor countries neighbouring upon them scarcely anything. The greater part of this immense wealth is spent on very expensive weapons or deposited in rich countries. This is brought about by maintaining, if necessary even by armed force, feudal regimes organized by rich and powerful nations. One other fact might

3) Cf. Arthur McCormack, *The Population Explosion*, New York, Harper & Row, 1973, p. 60.

be helpful to grasp the iniquitous situation in the world: one country alone is expending 40% of the annual energy resources of the world while it has only 6% of the population of the world.

So the population problem cannot be tackled merely by bringing down the birth rate; nor can it be done on a local or regional basis. It is indeed a global issue. A sense of brotherhood and solidarity is essential to face it. Racism that restricts certain vast spaces of the earth practically to people of a certain race has to go. The same evil is behind much of the open and covert exploitation of some nations by others. The external forms of imperialism and colonialism have been shed but the real relationship of the newly emancipated nations with their erstwhile masters has not changed very much. The latter manage to retain their hold by means of various old structures still persisting and with the help of alienated elite classes whose thinking is largely determined by the literature and other influences of the dominating countries. The capitalist class in poor countries is, of course, directly dependent on international capitalism. All this has to change radically if the 'population bomb', as it is called, is not to explode in violence on a large scale causing misery for many.

Just as the individual couple should be free in determining the number of children they are going to have, so also individual nations must be free to have their own population policies. These should not be imposed by others as a condition for the so-called 'aid' while the poor densely populated countries must show a sense of responsibility on their part. Freedom and voluntary cooperation is needed at every level.

Conclusion

The contribution which the Church can bring to the solution of the population problem is evident. She has to proclaim the values of human dignity and freedom, the need for every human being to live in modest comfort and the need for fraternal solidarity and cooperation on the local, national and international planes. The Church can do much to bring about the conditions in which free responsible decision is possible on the part of individual couples by the process of proper education, formal and informal. The judgement of the Church on certain

methods of birth control should not appear as a negative stance but as spotlighting the value of openness to life which is necessary to uphold the inestimable value of human life. Members of the Church should be the first to realize the population problem and cooperate with all people of good will in resolving it in order to improve the quality of human life with all the respect due to the individual human person and the sacred partnership of married couples.

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The Dynamism of the Church's Teaching on Contraception

Some people feel that the Church today faces a dilemma as far as family planning is concerned. The alternatives before her are said to be embarrassing. On the one hand, they say, if the Church reaffirmed her traditional opposition to all artificial means of birth regulation, that would amount to ignoring the data of modern sciences and the reasoned convictions of many Catholic couples, and causing a crisis in their minds. On the other hand, if the Church went back on her traditional position, that would jeopardize her authority because it would be equivalent to admitting that the previous teaching was wrong.

It is not correct to think that the Church has no alternatives other than the two courses of action listed above. A rigid adherence to two alternatives only sees a contradiction between the traditional position of the Church and the modern findings. If one is right the other must be wrong. This way of

viewing things overlooks the existence of a higher vision in which the genuine values of both alternatives can be combined. The tendency of disregarding the possibility of a superior reconciling viewpoint has done much harm to the Church. We immediately think of the doctrine of inerrancy of the Bible. It is one of the tenets of Catholicism that the Scriptures are without error. When scripture scholars began detecting some chronological, geographical, and historical errors in the Bible, many Catholics took to panic thinking that if the scholars were right (as seemed evident) the teaching of the Church would be wrong. This panic was unnecessary because the teaching of the Church and the finding of the scholars could be reconciled in a global viewpoint that took into consideration the significance of literary forms and the findings of linguistic studies.

Infallibility is not involved in the Church's teaching

It is asked whether the official teaching of the Holy See condemning artificial birth control as intrinsically evil and hence as never permissible, is irreformable and definitive, in such a way that nothing more can be said about it? Is the infallibility of the Church involved in this position?

Gregory Baum distinguishes between the solemn definitions of the councils and popes speaking *ex cathedra*, the ordinary magisterium of the universal Church and other authoritative, but non-infallible teaching. The universal ordinary magisterium consists of the unanimous Christian teaching of all the Catholic bishops as expressed in pastoral letters, sermons, catechisms, decrees, etc. In order to speak of universal magisterium and seek in it the infallible guidance of the Spirit we must presuppose that the consensus of the bishops is not the result of external conformity nor the effect of the authority of the pope on the bishops subject to him, but rather that the unanimous conviction regarding the meaning of the Gospel is one to which all the bishops have made their contribution, by listening to God's word, wrestling with the exigencies of truth, probing into the meaning of the Gospel for our days and reflecting on the Christian convictions of their own people.¹

1. Gregory Baum, Can the Church Change Her Position on Birth control? in: *Contraception and Holiness*, New York, 1964, pp. 313-314.

Of the highest authority in the Catholic Church, though not claiming to be acts of solemn teaching or an expression of the universal magisterium, is the ordinary teaching of the popes, as found in papal encyclicals. In the last hundred years this teaching has exercised an ever growing normative function in the Catholic Church, though no claim has ever been made that the ordinary teaching of the popes is infallible.

In the encyclicals, the popes are fulfilling their function as universal teachers of the Church. They cannot, therefore, be disregarded by Catholics. The precise degree and importance of this act of ordinary magisterium must be gauged by a number of considerations; for example, its connection with other Church teachings of perhaps a more solemn kind. In such cases, the authority of the statement is determined by what has elsewhere been more solemnly defined.

That the present position of the Church on artificial birth control does not involve infallibility was made clear by Mgr. Lambruschini when he released the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* to the press at the Vatican. If *Humanae Vitae* or any other ecclesiastical document on the point were infallible, it is difficult to understand the heated discussion that went on before the publication of *Humanae Vitae* and which continues even after.

The dynamic nature of the Church's teaching

Every teaching is imperfect in some sense and it needs to be perfected as time goes on. There is no teaching in the religious or moral order where more could not be said. We maintain that the Church's doctrine on artificial birth control is to be understood dynamically if we are not to fall into baffling contradictions.

We have in the history of Church's teaching several instances where this development and evolution are manifest. Let us take the case of usury, for instance. The contemporary teaching about what used to be called usury is completely different from what it was about six hundred years ago. No modern theologian would condemn lending money at interest, though the theologians were unanimous in denouncing it in the past. In 1314 Clement V at the Council of Vienna decreed: "If any one

falls into the error so that he presumes pertinaciously to affirm that to practise usury is not a sin, we decree that he is to be punished as a heretic." Stopping short of defining the sinfulness of usury to be a matter of faith, this solemn denunciation indicated that this position is proximate to being a matter of faith.²

Contemporary theologians give an entirely different meaning to the word "Church" from the one which was prevalent in the sixteenth century. A few centuries ago the word "Church" meant to theologians the Roman Catholic communion, so that the maxim "no salvation out of the Church" virtually precluded all non-Catholics from being saved. Today the word "Church" is understood with much more elasticity.

Many authoritative declarations of the popes of the last century condemned as dangerous the doctrine which asserted that every man had the natural right to religious liberty. In *Quanta Cura* of Pius IX we read: "From this completely false conception of social rule (naturalism) they did not hesitate to foster that erroneous opinion which is especially injurious to the Catholic Church and the salvation of souls, called by our predecessor Gregory XVI insane raving, namely that freedom of conscience and of worship is the proper right of each man, and this should be proclaimed and asserted in every rightly constituted society".³ Through a deeper understanding of what the human person is as well as through many changes in the social order, this condemnation of freedom, at one time taught with authority demanding obedience, has been abandoned by Vat. II.

The narrow identification of the Mystical Body and the Roman Catholic Church in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis* was politely by-passed in Vatican II's decree on Ecumenism⁴. The encyclical *Humani Generis* saw no means whereby the Catholic doctrine of original sin could be reconciled with polygenism⁵.

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2. John Noonan, Authority, Usury and Contraception, *Cross Currents*. Winter 1966, p. 60.
 3. Dent. 1960, 1613.
 4. Section 3.
 5. Denz. 3897.

More recently Pope Paul VI withdrew a reiteration of this statement on the advice of theologians⁶.

The Council of Laodicea forbade prayer with heretics. It moreover declared that heretics were not permitted to enter the house of God as long as they continued in heresy⁷. In the twelfth century a series of decretals appeared in ecclesiastical law, the first among which was the Decretals of Gratian. In the decretals that followed the Decree of Gratian, ratified and published under papal authority, communication with heretics was declared forbidden by natural and divine law⁸.

In the beginning of this century a certain mitigation began to set in, in the matter of participation of non-Catholics in Catholic religious rites. Canon 1258 of the Code which forbids Catholics to participate in non-Catholic religious services does not forbid the non-Catholics to take part in Catholic rites. In the Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches, Vatican II gives the following directive regarding intercommunication: "Divine Law forbids... things and places."

As Vatican II drew to a close, Paul VI set a papal precedent by participating in an inter-faith prayer service with the non-Catholic observers at the Council. During the service, in the Basilica of St. Paul outside the walls on December 4, 1965 a Methodist minister, a Greek Orthodox archmandrite and a Catholic priest gave the readings and a Lutheran hymn was sung.

There are many other examples of development in the position taken by authority at various times during history, all of which would confirm what Cardinal Newman said concerning the proclamation of papal infallibility: "What one pope can do another can undo." A superficial observer might accuse the Church of inconsistency with regard to its moral ideals, yet a deeper

6. Cf. Gregory Baum, *The Magisterium in a Changing Church*, *Concilium*, Vol. I, n. 3, p. 42, note 24.

7. Cf. John Prah, *Communication of Non-Catholics in Catholic Religious Rites*, Washington, 1956, p. 43.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 43-45.

9. Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches, nn. 26-28.

insight into the life of the Church will reveal that throughout and beyond these changes there is the unchanging desire of the Church to be faithful to its own self-understanding in the faith it has received.

A growth in doctrine such as we have explained in the cases above is visible also in regard to artificial birth control. The first papal treatment of artificial birth control was the decretal *Si aliquis*, a condemnation of uncertain origin, adopted by Gregory IX for the Decretals.¹⁰ It was a condemnation of contraception by potion.

On December 31, 1930, in answer to a widely publicized statement of the Anglican Church condoning contraception in some cases, Pope Pius XI issued *Casti Connubii* an encyclical explicitly stating the official Catholic doctrine on marriage and its abuses. It contained his famous condemnation of artificial birth control. On October 29, 1951, addressing the Italian Association of Midwives, Pope Pius XII made a major restatement of the doctrinal points plus the first authoritative declaration on the morality of periodic abstinence, practised to avoid conception by limiting sexual expression to the periods of natural sterility. This was a step forward. It was an application of apparently unaltered doctrinal principles to a particular practice that had become somewhat widespread, due to the refinements in the techniques of rhythm. The significance of this statement consists in its official recognition of the morality of excluding conception by avoiding periods of fertility and the legitimacy of marital relations whose sole purpose is to express mutual love, provided the act remains intact.

The Second Vatican Council promulgated *The Church in the Modern World*, with a chapter on marriage. A beautiful invitation to creative fecundity, to marital love and to responsible parenthood, the chapter neither reaffirms nor discards the previous papal doctrine subordinating mutual love to procreation. The Council said it knew that "often in conditions of today's life," spouses are in circumstances "in which the number of offspring,

10. John Noonan, *Contraception*, Cambridge, Mass., 1966, pp. 168-169.

at any rate for the time being, cannot be increased." The parental responsibility to limit births then conflicted with the demands of love, and this conflict, the Council noted, threatened both the good of marital fidelity and the education of the children. There was candid avowal that the attempt to achieve all the basic goods of marriage might produce a crisis.

There are, the Council teaches, moral criteria for marital intimacy. These criteria are "taken from the nature of the person and his acts." These criteria must determine what acts respect "an integral sense of mutual donation and human procreation in the context of true love." In these statements a true advance occurred. The scholastic approach, which stated that the criteria were to be found in the nature of the act of intercourse, was rejected. In accepting the criterion "taken from the nature of the person and his acts", the Council eliminated the usual argument against contraception which were focused on the nature of the marital act abstracted from the person. Now the person and all his acts were made the norm for judgement.

Finally, the Council gave some guidance as to how conjugal love and the education of children were to be reconciled with the responsibility to regulate the number of offspring. It stated flatly "that there cannot be a true contradiction between the divine laws of transmitting life and those favouring genuine conjugal love." When these were known it would also be known what rules could not be divine law. At last such a procedure seemed recommended by the Council in preference to one of hypothetizing the divine laws and trying to accommodate the laws of conjugal love to them.¹¹

Then we have the teaching of the *Humanae Vitae*. At first sight *Humanae Vitae* might appear to be a rigid document which goes back to the teaching of *Casti Connubii* and which does not take into account the complexities of modern life. It is not so if we view the teaching of the *Humanae Vitae* in a collegial sense. As we all know several hierarchies issued statements regarding the pastoral implementation of the directives of *Humanae Vitae*.

11. John Noonan, Contraception and the Council, *Commonweal* 11 March 1966, pp. 661-662.

All the episcopal statements underline the positive insights in the papal document regarding married love and fruitfulness. As regards the precise point of the morality of artificial birth control in difficult cases some hierarchies make statements which may be considered as a development on the papal teaching. As Bernard Häring points out, the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* demanded the active participation of the bishops, which in its turn depended on the active participation of the faithful. In the declarations of the bishops we find the dynamic character of the magisterium of the universal Church. In them we find pastoral approaches which are faithful to the fundamental teachings of the encyclical and which yet take account of the complexity of the situation in the Catholic world and of the problem of conscience of many couples. The episcopal declarations should not be regarded as casuistic commentaries on the encyclical. They go beyond the encyclical on certain points, endeavouring to distinguish its fundamental teachings from secondary questions. They formulate a constructive response to the new questions and situations which are arising in the Church.¹²

The doctrine of collegiality teaches us that the bishops do not get their teaching mission from the pope, and hence do not fulfil the mission by simply repeating the papal teachings in their dioceses. As successors of the Apostles, the bishops possess a teaching power of their own which must be used in giving expression to the faith of the Church. The entire episcopal college is responsible with the Pope for the teaching of the universal Church. The pope cannot take away the co-responsibility of the bishops as it is founded, as much as papal primacy, on the very constitution.

With regard to teaching and policy-making, the bishops' responsibility extends to the entire Church, not merely to their own dioceses. Vatican II, while acknowledging the doctrine of papal primacy, spells out the doctrine of episcopal collegiality which is a part and parcel of the divine structure of the Church. The pope has to respect the co-responsibility of the bishops. He may not exclude them from sharing in the highest government

12. Karl Rahner and Bernard Häring, *Riflessioni sull' enciclica 'Humanae Vitae'*, Rome, 1968, pp. 61-63.

and teaching. He is always united with them and acts on their behalf. The pope is part of the Church. In the exercise of his office, he has to respect the co-responsibility of all Christians and, in particular, the collegiality of the bishops.

Austin Flannery has given a survey of the pertinent statements of the hierarchies.¹³ We shall draw upon this survey. The declaration of the Belgian hierarchy appeared on 30th August 1968, which among other things said: "Finally, in dealing with the concrete application of certain directives of the moral order, it can happen that because of certain circumstances that appear to them as conflicts of duties, some of the faithful sincerely believe that it is impossible for them to conform to these directives. In this case, the Church asks them to seek loyally the mode of acting that will permit them to adapt their conduct to the given norms. If they do not succeed at first they should not consider that because of this they are separated from God's love"¹⁴. The Belgian bishops would seem to regard the norm of the encyclical as an ideal to be conscientiously aimed at, but which one can fail to reach here and now without committing sin.

The Italian bishops' statement came out on September 10, 1968. It mentions a conflict of duties and explicitly refers to the encyclical's position on birth control as an ideal goal. The Italian statement insists that "the order willed by God be respected in the conjugal act and in all the processes involved in it: it is in such respect that the most coherent expression is given to the love without reserve which ought to unite husband and wife and to the ensuing readiness for fruitful selfgiving with which they ought to be imbued."

"Without doubt this is not all that is required for the couple's life and growth in that total and fruitful love to which the Lord calls them. The success of married life depends on a much larger and more profound dedication and one would be mistaken if one reduced marriage morality to this one aspect alone. But at the same time this aspect is an indispensable ele-

13. Austin Flannery, *Humanae Vitae: Hierarchies Give Pastoral Advice*, *Doctrine and Life* 19(1969) pp. 89-106.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

ment in the achievement of perfection and fullness. Married people cannot but recognize in this norm, at once humble and sublime, *an ideal goal* to which their married dignity and vocation constantly obliges them."¹⁵

The next statement to appear was that of the Austrian bishops. It simply stated that since in his encyclical "the Holy Father did not define the use of the pills as a mortal sin," a Catholic who uses contraceptives "is not necessarily parted from the love of God and may receive Holy Communion without confession."¹⁶

The statement by the Canadian hierarchy was issued on September 27, 1968. It is similar to that of the Belgian bishops: "Counsellors may meet other persons who, accepting the teaching of the Holy Father, find that because of particular circumstances they are involved in what seems to them a clear conflict of duties; e. g., the reconciling of conjugal love and responsible parenthood with the education of children already born, or with the health of the mother. In accord with the accepted principles of moral theology, if these persons have tried sincerely but without success to pursue a line of conduct in keeping with the given directives, they may be safely assured that whoever honestly chooses that course which seems right to him does so in good conscience."¹⁷

The Scandinavian bishops brought out their statement a few weeks later on October 17, 1968. We read the following in their statement: "The spiritual guide should bear in mind the possibility of growth and increasing maturity in the personal and intimate sphere of married life. He must also consider the eventuality of one of the partners being convinced that he is following the dictates of his conscience, while diverging from the norm of the encyclical, and that, in this case, there exists no sin, requiring confession or exclusion from Holy Communion."¹⁸

The French bishops released their statement on November 27, 1968. They wrote: "Contraception can never be a good thing. It is always a disorder, but the disorder is not always culpable.

15. Ibid., p. 100.

16. Ibid., p. 102.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., p. 104.

It can happen, in effect, that couples can find themselves faced with a veritable conflict of duties."

"On the one hand they are conscious of their obligation to respect the openness to life of every conjugal act. But they are equally convinced in conscience that they must avoid or postpone another birth, while being unable to ensure this by relying on biological rhythms. On the other hand, they do not see, for their part, how they can in fact renounce the physical expression of their love without thereby endangering the stability of their home."

"On this point, we simply recall the constant teaching of moral theology: when one is faced with a choice between two duties, in such wise that no matter what decision one makes, one cannot avoid evil, traditional wisdom bids one seek, before God, whichever is the greater duty. Let the couple themselves determine this after examining the problem together with all the care which the grandeur of their married vocation requires."¹⁹

In their statement issued in December 1968 the Swiss bishops said: "Couples who have decided to give birth to children and who live a Christian and human married life are complying with the fundamental demands of God's will. It may happen that in a particular instance they are unable to comply with all the demands of the encyclical concerning the regulation of births. If they do not act out of egoism or a care for material values, but rather endeavour in all sincerity to do God's will more perfectly every day, it is permissible for them to conclude that they are not culpable in the eyes of God."²⁰

The bishops of Japan also published their statement in the month of December 1968. On the specific point which we are now considering they said: "We are well aware that the observance of this teaching will bring difficulties to many married people. In such cases if, while exerting all good will to be obedient to the encyclical, they are unable to follow it in some point on account of unavoidable actual and objective circum-

19. Ibid., pp. 104-105.

20. Ibid., p. 106.

stances, the faithful should not think that they have been separated from the love of God.”²¹

The following statement by the bishops of Indonesia was released in November 1972, to clarify a still earlier statement they had issued on population and family planning questions: “Although there is a conflict of consciences, many times the situation demands that people weighing their responsibility before God and their consciences, realize that in judging the evil or goodness of the act, in the final analysis they must follow the dictates of their consciences. A Christian, in order to form his moral judgment, will always give proper and full consideration to the position of the Holy Father. However, it is also understood and agreed upon that parents, in consideration of strengthening the love between themselves and of the needs of their family, in special situations perhaps will arrive at a conclusion contrary to the teachings of the encyclical, precisely in respect to the teaching regarding the methods forbidden to use other than sexual abstinence in planned parenthood.... If a competent person who is able to form his own opinion, after weighing the matter before his Creator from many serious aspects and through adequate information, in particular instances arrives at a different conclusion, he is allowed to follow that conclusion but at the same time honestly continue to search.”

“....There are parents who are troubled because from the one side they feel the obligation to regulate births, but from other they are not able to fulfil this obligation by temporary or absolute sexual abstinence. In these circumstances, they decide responsibly and do not need to feel that they have sinned if they employ other methods, provided that the human dignity of wife and husband is not diminished, and provided that the means employed do not go against human life (i. e., abortion and permanent sterilization) and provided medical responsibility is upheld.”

“Medical personnel are directly involved in these problems of parents. They, and also Catholic medical institutions, do not perform evil if they responsibly advise and aid the request of

21. Ibid.

parents who desire to avoid a new pregnancy by employing other methods than total or periodical sexual abstinence. However, they must always hold that provoked abortion and permanent sterilization for regulating birth are absolutely forbidden."

"The priests are asked to give adequate direction to all the faithful, particularly to parents and to medical personnel of the place who ask for information, according to the line of the above statement. Hopefully, the priest will be tolerant enough not to condemn either those who feel obliged to follow total or periodical sexual abstinence or those who feel obliged to employ other means. In this matter the priests as representatives of their bishops will follow the advice as outlined in this pastoral clarification."²²

In 1974, Australia's Catholic bishops restated their support for Pope Paul VI's teaching on birth control, but in a pastoral statement said priests should show understanding toward Catholics who conscientiously find the teaching hard to accept. A Catholic who in good conscience finds himself at variance with the teaching "would certainly not have cut himself off from the Church." To those who "accept the teaching of the pope but at times fail in their efforts to observe it" or who feel "unable to observe it because of special circumstances," a priest should show understanding and encouragement. "Above all he must encourage them in the frequent reception of the sacraments... He must help them to see the value of the Catholic teaching on marriage and the positive enrichment that its observance will bring to their married life." Some examples of "special circumstances" hindering observance of the papal teaching are "the health of the wife, the economic difficulties of the family already large, the unwillingness of the other partner to accept the Church's teaching, a threat to the marriage itself." After pointing out that *Humanae Vitae* "is an authentic and authoritative document of the Church and, as such, it calls for a religious submission of will and of mind," the bishops observed: "It is not impossible, however, that an individual may fully accept the teaching authority of the pope in general, may be aware of his teaching in this matter, and yet reach a position after honest study and prayer that is at variance

22. Cf. *Catholic Mind*, January 1974, pp. 10-11.

with the papal teaching. Such a person could be without blame; he would certainly not have cut himself off from the Church; and in acting in accordance with his conscience he could be without subjective fault." In counselling such a person, a priest may never teach that contraception is objectively good in any circumstances whatever. "While admitting such a person to the sacraments, the priest will continue his pastoral efforts to lead him to a fuller spiritual life... He will encourage him to keep his attitudes under review in the light of the Church's teaching and he will try to develop in him a more sensitive response to the fullness of Christian morality."²³

To conclude, the bishops whose statements we have considered above appear to view certain directives of the encyclical as an ideal which every Christian must strive to attain. Several theologians agree with the interpretation given by the above-cited bishops. Karl Rahner, for instance, speaks of the encyclical as constituting an ideal. This ideal cannot, however, be immediately realized in every instance. Rahner takes as an example the norm of monogamy in the Old Testament period. Even then monogamy was truly a part of the institution of marriage, but it was not so practised. We might perhaps have a similar or parallel situation in the case of the encyclical. The ideal always looks forward to an age in which it will clearly be practised for what it is. It aims at a new situation, and since it is a moral ideal, it aims even at the creation of that new situation. Since this involves a process of development, it follows that while the new situation is coming into being, there will be individuals who will be unable to fulfil the ideal obligation.²⁴ According to Charles Giblin, the norms enunciated in the *Humanae Vitae* should be understood against the background of the gospel law. The law of the gospel focuses on the ideal made possible by grace. The Pope levies no disciplinary sanction. He upholds for the most part on a realizable ideal. One will follow God most faithfully if one follows the Pope's practical norms to the letter. These norms are ideals true to the gospel vision of what is actually possible by grace.

23. *The Examiner*, October 26, 1974, pp. 522-523.

24. Cf. James Mulligan, Confessor, Penitent and Humane Vitae, *The Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, 69(1969) pp. 508-509.

even if not binding under sin or serious sin. This law is supremely demanding, but it is not radically prohibition.²⁵

Fr. Martelet, who has been partly responsible for the drafting of the Encyclical *Humanae Vitae* and who was appointed by the Bishops of France to introduce the encyclical to the French public, considers the encyclical as an ideal which requires certain conditions to be put fully into practice. The following quotations are taken from Fr. Martelet's reply to the question of understanding the encyclical under the conditions existing in India. "All that I have written so far on contraception remains valid in my eyes. I deny nothing that the Church has declared on this point. I think however that one must have the courage to draw from the doctrine of the Church consequences enlightening, such as to meet the needs of people in the concrete situations in which they live."

"All the concrete conditions for a total fidelity to the moral law are not necessarily and always given to all. The Popes, since Leo XIII and Pius XI, had said again and again, 'a minimum of well-being is necessary to enable one to practise virtue'. It is therefore necessary to ask oneself if people who question us about contraception are or are not living in sub-human conditions. Sub-human conditions, according to me, are 1) evident material penury, but also 2) housing conditions so meagre as not to allow the minimum space and liberty which make for the elementary expansion of man, wife and children (3) I call finally sub-human conditions such a number of children that their upbringing becomes a nightmare."

"A household which finds itself in such conditions, whose members question us about contraception, cannot be considered as living in conditions which in the eyes of the Church are suitable for the normal practice of morality. Of course, we are not to dispense them from the law – the law does not depend on our authority – but we have not to exact its observance, given our misery that since we have not educated the conscience of our people, they have to bear the burden of a law which crushes them instead of enlightening them."....

25. Charles Giblin, *Humanae Vitae – Prohibition?*, *Doctrine and Life*, 18(1968) pp. 614-615.

"I think then - everybody is not of my opinion - the contraception is, with regard to couples finding themselves in these difficulties, a lesser evil than the peril of a union seriously compromised or the peril of a child that might come (the peril of a possible pregnancy)."...

"All that I have then to say to you is, I believe in all sincerity after mature examination, in entire conformity with the spirit of the Encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. But I believe also that this conformity is not always perceived by others. I know in particular that I have been denounced in high places as a deceitful interpreter of the Encyclical. The Pope cannot be unaware of this and yet he maintains his full confidence in me. He has just given me a token of approval with regard to my latest book (*L'Existence et D'Amour*)."

As Gregory Baum rightly notes, the present position in the Church on artificial birth control in conflict situation does not contradict the papal teaching on the same matter. The teaching of the whole Church is definitely a development on the papal teaching. The pope is guided by God's Spirit and he is teacher par excellence of the Church. At the same time one may envisage the possibility that in certain areas of teaching, areas not central to the Gospel, there occurs real growth of insight, so that the positions held by the popes or even by the Church in different ages are part of a gradual evolution. Behind this development of teaching there stands the perpetual intention of the Church to announce the unchanging Gospel for its time. In the area of moral teaching, in particular, the Church has tried to apply unchanging moral values in various ways, as best as was known at the time, to the varying conditions of each age.²⁶

The most obvious case which comes to mind here is that of religious liberty. In the last century the Holy See repeatedly condemned the idea that every man has the right to religious liberty. The Holy See regarded it as absurd and untrue to assert that a just constitution of a state should include a paragraph guaranteeing religious liberty to its citizens. Yet today we teach that according to the Gospel and to natural law a human person

26. Gregory Baum, loc. cit., pp. 331-332.

has the right to choose his religion according to the dictates of his conscience and be free to worship God with his fellow-believers.

How to explain this apparent change of position that has taken place in this area? Bishop de Smedt explains this way: The Church has always announced and defended the same unchanging value of human liberty. In the last century, the ideal of religious liberty was proposed by men who had a rationalistic misconception of the jurisdictional omnipotence of the state and who regarded the individual conscience to be subject to no law or no divinely given norm. In this context the Church condemned religious liberty. In our own century, however, the ideal of religious liberty has been severed from the political context in which it arose, and it is for the sake of the same human freedom that the Church now teaches that religious liberty is a natural right of man.²⁷

Bishop de Smedt showed that this doctrinal development is governed by two principles, a principle of continuity expressed in the abiding concern of the Church for human liberty, and a principle of progress expressed in the growing insight into the meaning of this value and the change of policy in its political application. This progress took place because of a change in the structure of modern society and, more profoundly, because of a deeper understanding of who man is.

In a similar way we may explain the change in the teaching on usury. We have to look at the purpose of the ruling and ask not what was absolutely prohibited, but, 'Why was an absolute prohibition enacted? What was the function of the rule?' If these questions are posed, it may be answered that the goods the Church was protecting were justice and charity; that the goals it sought were the protection of the poor from exploitation, the encouragement of the avaricious to share their wealth, and the proper distribution of capital for the life of the community. The function of the usury rule was to achieve these ends and to protect these values. The usury rules were a good rule for the

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 332-333.

society of the time. Specific moral rules enacted by the Church may be taken as sure guides for the periods for which they were enacted but they are not beyond re-examination and revision to preserve their purpose and to protect the permanent goods they safeguard. The Church is committed to proclaiming justice and charity. But what acts are just and charitable depends on the concrete circumstances of a society. If economy changes the requirements of justice and charity will change; some acts will receive more moral emphasis, others less; the moral attitude toward certain activities will be altered; the rules prescribing certain acts and prescribing others will undergo re-examination. What has been thought to have been essential may be seen as essential only in a given context. Such re-examination occurred with respect to usury rule. The purpose was realized by a new rule. This was possible without error by the Church.²⁸

Gregory Baum sees a similar evolution of doctrine taking place in the Church's attitude toward sexuality in married life. Theologians have been driven to a deeper reflection on what is really natural in man, partially because of the changed social conditions in which we live, and partially because of the growing concern with Christian anthropology. The principle of continuity in such a change of position is the abiding concern of the Church that marriage be fruitful with children and always remain a school of selflessness and love. The principle of progress in the change is seen in the growing appreciation of the sexual act as a human value in a well-ordered marriage, the morality of which is not determined by the biological coherence of its performance, but by its meaning in terms of interpersonal relationship between husband, wife and the existing children.²⁹

According to John Noonan the goods the absolute prohibition of contraception sought to protect and the goals it sought to achieve are chiefly four, namely, that procreation is good; innocent life may never be attacked; the personal dignity of a spouse must be respected by the other spouse; and that sexual love is holy in marriage. In the context of an assault on pro-

28. John Noonan, *Authority, Usury and Contraception*, loc. cit., pp. 72-73.

29. Gregory Baum, loc. cit., p. 343.

creation carried on by various dualist groups for ever twelve hundred years, the rule on contraception functioned to protect the value of the procreative act. In the context of environments where embryonic life was held cheap and where methods of abortion and contraception were not sharply distinguished, the rule functioned to protect innocent life by treating every step in the process of generation as sacred. In the context of environments where personal freedom in the choice of a spouse was rare, and the danger of exploitation of the woman was great, the rule operated to save the procreative dignity of the wife. In the context of close association of contraception with adultery and fornication, the prohibition reinforced marital fidelity. Today these goods can be safeguarded without an absolute rule on contraception and therefore the rule has been revised in as much as a shift in the environment made revision desirable.³⁰

This approach refuses to identify the rule on artificial birth control as an absolute. The command to love one another may be made specific in particular environment by the rule of the Church on artificial birth control, but the Church is always free to look again to see if in a new situation the rule is still the best specification of the commandment of love. It is with this sense of freedom that the bishops and theologians have interpreted the papal norms.

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30. John Noonan, *Authority, Usury and Contraception*, loc. cit., p. 74.

Methods of Natural Family Planning

Overview

Natural Family Planning aided by modern scientific discoveries is making giant strides. "Evidence is emerging that what is morally right is medically right and this evidence will soon be overwhelming." (J. J. Billings)

This presentation on Natural Family Planning Methods outlines in brief the contraceptive mentality, and indicates what contraception is. It draws the distinction between Family Planning and contraception.

Family Planning is only one of the responsibilities of parenthood, and has to be considered within the 'totality' of marriage, if it is to be a way of life for the couple and not a technique or device to be employed for the mere prevention of births. Therefore it calls for responsible decision-making.

Responsible decisions cannot be made in ignorance. It calls for knowledge and enlightened dialogue throughout the marriage, a shared responsibility, conscious parenthood.

"When a man possessing in himself charity, its present realities and its promises, realises he can give God to the one he loves, then he has grasped what Christian marriage itself is."

(Cardinal G. Maria Garrone)

Though the Natural Methods are presented in detail, one cannot ignore the problem of over population especially in India, and the contribution N. F. P. can make in trying to effect a solution.

The most recent advances in N. F. P. are included. In short this presentation is up to date, with regard to the research and application. "It is up to us to make this knowledge a gift to the World." (J. J. Billings)

One of the things that distinguishes modern life from former times is open discussions on sexual questions. This change

touches especially on the matter of birth regulation and limitation, both on the micro level of the person and the family and on the macro level of society.

In this great metamorphosis of attitudes and outlook to sexual norms and behaviour of marriage and family life, the crucial question is: How can human procreation be responsibly planned?

Contraception is not synonymous with responsible parenthood, and when a couple want to plan their family in a responsible way, the critical problem is to discern particular needs and ways involved in such planning.

It is singularly unfortunate that many persons who follow family planning and those who teach family planning are too often obsessed with the sole ambition to prevent births— 'Anti-Baby': a sickness in society of establishing 'Baby quotas'.

In this 'Contraceptive mentality' it is not difficult to isolate cases of medical personnel who have deliberately set out to disturb the normal physiology by the medication of women with highly potent synthetic hormones. The effect of this is a powerful onslaught on their reproductive system with the express purpose of frustrating nature— a concept that can be described as medically repugnant. When ICUDs are used the object again is to disturb, by use of a foreign body, the normal physiological process of pregnancy. Failure of contraceptives results in the termination of the life of the unborn child.

In short, the basis of modern technological approach to contraception is a conspiracy against life itself, which is achieved by the abandonment of traditional medical principles; by the use of unphysiological medication in normal women, and the insertion of harmful foreign bodies and, where these fail, by destroying the child itself on some idle pretext, usually with a so-called 'psychiatric' name tag.¹

Despite this 'contraceptive mentality' and hostility to Natural Methods of Family Planning, of persons in authority due to ignorance and from commercial motives, there has been

1. Hume K, M. R. G. C. P. *Workshop Ovulation Method*, July 4th 1973. Sydney, Australia.

of late an extraordinary increase of interest in these methods. This new interest amongst those persons who promote it and those who follow it is probably due to:

1. An anti-materialistic philosophy of many of the young people to-day to restore to man his basic right for a better life.

2. An increasing resistance to artificial contraception arising from an awareness and experience of serious medical complications. This is evident from statistics from around the world and is admitted by experts. In Western Society the acceptance rate is in the vicinity of 70 per cent. In India they have been in the words of Dr Malcom Potts, Executive Director of I. P. P. F. "a miserable experience."

3. There have been remarkable developments in the knowledge of human fertility in recent years, and these have enabled Natural Family Planning to be established on a secure scientific basis. Not every one, even of the medical personnel, is well-informed about these advances, and their ignorance is compounded by a confusion of nomenclature.² The Rhythm, the Temperature and the Ovulation Methods should be clearly distinguished from each other.

4. A new realisation of the fact that there are millions of people in the world who will never accept any but a natural method of F. P. In some cases it is an instinctive preference, and this preference is strong amongst peoples of different religions. In some cases it is custom, while in others it is a matter of religion.

The natural sequence

God in His infinite wisdom created women in such a fashion that during their reproductive age span they are more

2. Billings J. J. *Workshop Ovulation Method*, July 4th, 1973. Sydney, Australia.

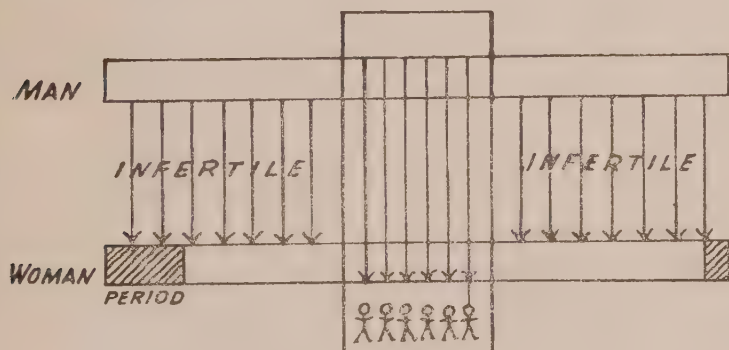
infertile than fertile. The complex sequence of events that determine the occurrence of ovulation is such that a woman can detect the time of her fertility during each cycle.

Thus it is part of the natural order of God's creation, that opportunity for the expression of conjugal love in sexual intercourse is available without any possibility of pregnancy. Thus the unitive and procreative functions of the act itself remain inseparable, fostering the merging and growth of their personalities in mutual love and generosity.

The responsible exercise of parenthood therefore calls for adequate knowledge as a basis for conscientious choice, marital harmony, respect for person and life and a positive outlook on fertility as an opportunity for conscious creation.

A man matures into constant fertility, while a woman matures into natural rhythms (cycles) of infertility and fertility. As a couple they live in the reality of *their combined fertility*, trying to integrate this factual knowledge into their intimacy, through constant dialogue.

Combined fertility



In short, awareness and knowledge of 'their cycle' is the first step in making responsible decisions, responsible loving and natural family planning.

Natural family planning

Natural family planning is, by definition, methods based upon the fertility-infertility cycle of women. In fact every menstrual cycle, even when allowance is made for the possibility of sperm survival, the days of infertility outnumber those of fertility and on these days of infertility it is impossible for the act of intercourse to cause conception. There exists in addition fertile cycles and periods of times when ovulation is suspended perhaps for months or even years. This occurs most often at menarche, lactation and menopause. The difficulty is to know the day of fertility. The methods can be used either to achieve or avoid pregnancy. When the need is to avoid pregnancy, then abstinence from sexual intercourse during the days of possible fertility is required.

These methods do not involve drug-taking nor the use of any appliance and the act of sexual intercourse is always normal.

Rhythm method: calendar rhythm

Ancient Jewish law makes it clear that some knowledge of woman's fertile and infertile times existed even before the Christian era. In a treatise written in the third century it is stated that, "a woman is capable of conception immediately after the bath of purification". The bath of purification (Tewila) is taken on the twelfth day of the menstrual cycle.³ Early Indian writings referred to *rtu*, the period at which conception is likeliest, as reported in the statute books at Madhavanidani compiled in the eighth century.⁴

Some forty years ago two eminent gynaecologists, Dr Knaus and Dr Orgino, working independently, made the discovery that ovulation connects in time with the menstruation that follows it, rather than the one that precedes it. However, when it came to the number of days, i. e., how many days before menstruation ovulation occurs, the two disagreed.

3. Jolly J. 1901, *Fundamentals of Indian-Aryan Philosophy and History*, Vol. 3, No. 10, quoted in *Die Therapie les Monats* 2nd Quarter, (Bochringer).
4. Holt J. C. 1960, *Marriage and Periodic Abstinence*, adapted John Marshall. (Long mans, Green and Co, London).

The Austrian, Dr Knaus (1929) stated that exactly fourteen days intervened between the day of ovulation and the next menstruation. He postulated that this was true despite the length of the cycle.

Dr Orgino, the Japanese gynaecologist, gave a wider view. He postulated that ovulation can occur over a period of five days beginning one day earlier than Knaus had stated and continuing three days beyond the fixed day nominated by Knaus. Thus according to Dr Orgino ovulation can occur as early as the eleventh day and as late as the fifteenth day in a 26-day cycle, and in a 28-day cycle, as early as the thirteenth day and as late as the seventeenth day.

Later popularisation of this method was done largely by a book called 'The Rhythm' written by Dr Lev J. Latz and published by the Latz foundation. Although the general principles upon which the rhythm is based are well understood, the application of these principles to an individual case is not always simple or accurate.⁵

About 70 per cent of these women menstruate on a regular 28-day cycle. In this group the determination of the fertile period is quite accurate. Slight variations in the cycle as 27 or 29 days are also quite reliable. In cases where the variation is of 3 or more days special care must be taken in calculating the fertile period.⁶

Keeping in mind the principle as mentioned above and making reference to the diagram, the Rhythm for this group of women may be calculated as follows:

-
5. Billings J. J. *The Ovulation Method*, 4th edition, the Advocate press, Melbourne.
 6. Cavanagh John, M. D. *Fundamental Marriage Counselling* 1966 Revised Edition.

Rhythm⁷

1	Period
2	"
3	"
4	"
5	"
6	Infertile
7	"
8	"
9	" (Safety factor)
10	Life of sperm.
11	"
12	"
13	Ovulation
14	"
15	"
16	Life of ovum
17	Infertility (Safety factor)
18	Sterile
19	"
20	"
21	"
22	"
23	"
24	"
25	"
26	"
27	"
28	"
29	Period.
30	"

1. Indicates the first day of the menstrual cycle which is the first day of the flow.

2. Indicates ovulation which is likely to occur, 13, 14, 15, days of the cycle from the first day of the menstrual period.

3. Since sperm survival and fertilisation are possible for a period of 72 hours, the days preceding ovulation are considered as potentially fertile.

4. Fertilisation is possible for a period of 24 hours, so 24 hours after ovulation are considered as potentially fertile.

5. As a precaution a 24-hour period is added at the end of the fertile period to allow for possible variations. Therefore days 9 and 17 are considered as potentially fertile. The rest of the cycle is sterile.

Maintaining this type of records, many people found that the Rhythm solved the problems they encountered in the regulation of births. while a number of reported failures were the result of inaccurate teaching or faulty application.

However, the Rhythm has inescapable weaknesses:

1. It is of little value when the cycles are unpredictably irregular. Theoretically the problem could be solved either by imposing

7. Cavanagh John, M. D. *Fundamental Marriage Counselling*, 1966 Revised Edition.

regularity upon the woman by medication or by abandoning the method in favour of one which requires no regularity. The former has been attempted without success and it is obviously undesirable in that it is likely to require the continuing medication of healthy women over variable lengths of time. However, few women have completely regular cycles, and in the same woman the length of the cycle may vary from month to month, especially after pregnancy and towards menopause.⁸

2. Another problem is that ovulation may be accompanied by uterine bleeding or spotting. Quite often a mistaken interpretation of the significance of the bleeding could lead the couple to the use of the days for intercourse at the most fertile time of cycle, even though the intention is to avoid pregnancy.

3. During lactation ovulation may resume before menstruation. In such a case there would be no reference point in relation to which days are possibly fertile.

The temperature method

The Basal Body temperature.

It was in 1868 that it was first noticed that a fall in temperature occurs at the time of menstruation. In 1928 Van de Velde related the rise in temperature observed in the second half of the menstrual cycle to the activity of the corpus luteum (white body) in secreting progesterone.

In a fertile cycle the body temperature is low during the period, falling even lower at ovulation and for some days before. After ovulation it rises, sometimes rapidly, sometimes gradually, until it has reached a higher plane. Just before, or during the next menstrual period it returns to the lower level again.⁹

This method can accurately identify the occurrence of ovulation by charting and interpreting the rise in body temperature. This is a post ovulatory method, and this phase can be confidently identified. The Basal Body Temperature is recorded,

8. Medical Handbook of The International Planned Parenthood Federation. (I. P. P. F.) page 59.

9, 10, 11. Frater M., *Teacher Training Programme*, 032. Sydney, Australia.

i. e., the temperature of the body at rest, after a night's sleep and before any activity.

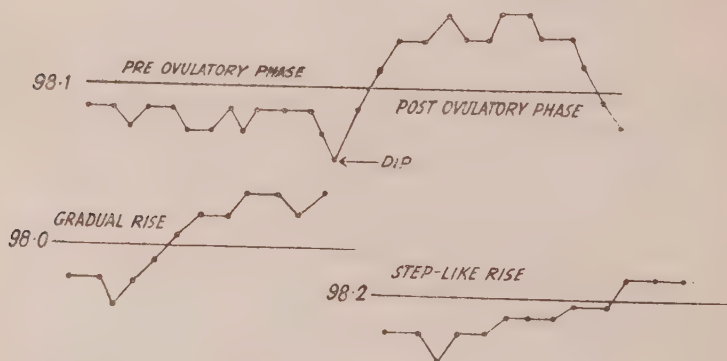
Rise in basal body temperature:

A sustained rise in body temperature within a day or after ovulation, indicates that ovulation has occurred. The range of the immediate temperature rise is to the order of 0.4 degree Fahrenheit to 1.0 degree Fahrenheit. The normal duration of the temperature rise is 9 to 13 days but variations may occur according to the length of the luteal (post ovulatory) phase.

The temperature is taken daily preferably at the same hour. An ovulation thermometer would be ideal, however, a suitable clinical thermometer will suffice. Oral temperatures are usually satisfactory but vaginal temperatures are found to be more accurate.

Whichever route is preferred, it is necessary that the thermometer remains in-situ for five minutes.

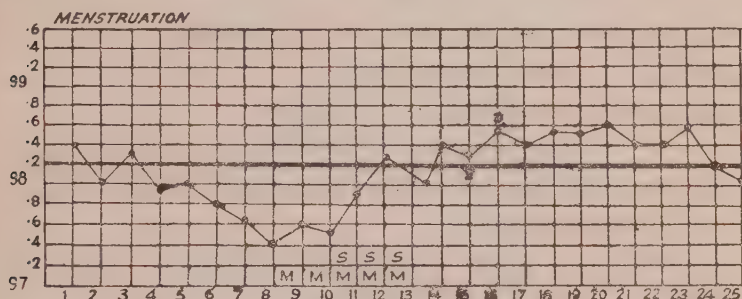
Biphasic pattern¹⁰



Marginal line

This is a commonly used term when following the temperature method. The Marginal line is a horizontal line drawn across the graph. It is set by calculating the mean of the lower readings and raising it by 0.4 degree Fahrenheit. This line usually occurs 0.4 degrees to 0.6 degrees below the mean of the higher level readings. The third day of the sustained temperature rise is safe for intercourse.

If there is any discrepancy, intercourse should not be recommenced until the fourth day past (mucus) peak. In these cases also check the setting of the marginal line. Also check that the client is using the same thermometer. They can vary by a small amount and the marginal line may need resetting.¹¹



Conditions that affect body temperature

These are low grade chronic infections, respiratory tract infections, hyperthyroidism and hypothyroidism, Addison's disease. A raised basal body temperature chart may indicate certain blood diseases.

Like the Rhythm, the Temperature method has been of notable service to married couples. Again it has many inescapable defects which must be recognised. These defects include the lack of specificity of the basal body temperature, as stated above. Experience with people has shown that the taking of the temperature, the reading of the mercury level accurately, the keeping of record and its interpretation all admit the possibility of error.

The general deficiencies of the temperature method are :

1. It gives no information about the approach of ovulation.
2. It fails to define fertility in an ovular cycles.
3. It is of very little value in women approaching menopause.
4. During lactation, there may be a resumption of ovulation, with a return of fertility without the warning of menstrual bleeding beforehand.

Knowledge of this has caused many exponents of the temperature method to persuade mothers to wean their babies in

the hope that ovulation will soon occur. It is however regrettable that a method should deny a child the nourishment best suited to its needs when it should be recommended both for maternal and child well-being.

The Basal Body Temperature linked with Vaginal Mucus Symptoms is the Sympto-Thermic Method of N. F. Planning.

Sympto: the symptoms of ovulation.

Thermic: the temperature rise at ovulation.

The method is based on the recognition of a sequence of pre-ovulatory and post-ovulatory symptoms and signs occurring during the menstrual cycle.

- 1) The oestrogen blood level peak producing 'oestrogenic' symptoms, the cervical mucus secretion, ovulation pain, etc.
- 2) Post-ovulatory rise in blood progesterone level due to the secretory activity of the corpus luteum, manifested by a rise in the basal body temperature.

From this, formulations have been derived:

- 1) When the post ovulatory temperature has been sustained for three days the ovum is presumed to have perished and intercourse is safe for the remainder of the cycle. Therefore, use of the post ovulatory phase offers the highest degree of safety.
- 2) Safety during the pre-ovulatory phase is variable, quite often the degree of safety in this phase depends on the competency of the woman in recognising mucus symptoms, and associated symptoms during ovulation.

Practicability of the method

Theoretically it is suited to all women irrespective of their cycle length and irregularity.

However, the method has limitations for women who are lactating, coming off the pill, or pre-menopausal.

Two degrees of reliability can be offered:

- a) Exceptional reliability is obtained when intercourse is restricted to the post ovulatory phase of the cycle, i. e., when the occurrence of ovulation has been established by recognition of the oestrogenic and progesterogenic symptoms.

b) When fertility control is not imperative, intercourse may be allowed on certain of the pre-ovulation days if no mucus is present. A minimal risk will be found acceptable in such cases.

Requirements for the successful use of the method ¹²

- 1) Motivation and cooperation are necessary.
- 2) The wife must train herself to recognise the significant signs and symptoms.
- 3) A properly maintained chart.
- 4) Accurate reading of the thermometer.
- 5) Success is enhanced by proper instruction and adequate supervision.

The ovulation method

A name that describes its basic principle accurately but clearly distinguishes it from rhythm.¹³ It is a distinct method to be used alone, and not to be used in conjunction with any other natural method. In fact it has made the rhythm method obsolete, and is replacing the temperature method.

During these years we have seen a steady improvement in the Ovulation method. Rules have been modified by experience and by the thorough investigation of mistakes. The study of the human reproductive cycle of fertility and infertility, is soundly based on firm scientific principles. Whereas these principles were arguable in 1950 when Fr Catarinich and Dr Billings commenced work on the Ovulation method, no informed person would now disagree with them.¹⁴

Development of the ovulation method

In the year 1952, the vital need was an immediate investigation of the rhythm which had fallen into disrepute, and Dr J. Billings was given this task. It was in this process of study

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12. *The S-T Ovulation Detection Method of Fertility Control*, T-T Course Family Life Centre, Sydney, Australia.
 13. Catarinich M. Fr. *The Ovulation Method and How It Developed*.
 14. Brown J. B. *Workshop Ovulation Method* July 3rd, 1973. Sydney Australia.

that work began on a better system. So began the long years on the ordinary woman's ability to determine ovulation for herself by simple observations of her own bodily changes in mid cycle. Once the time of ovulation is known with certainty the couple have it in their power to regulate pregnancies.

At this stage the work became ecumenical, when Dr J. B. Brown, Prof. of the Dept. Obstetrics and Gynaecology, of the University of Melbourne, a world authority on the chemistry of ovulation, joined the research team. With his help, Dr J. Billings was able to discard certain mid-cycle symptoms as being too inaccurate to pin-point ovulation. Among these were blood staining and various pain sensations.

In 1964 the first edition of the book, *The Ovulation Method* was published; at this stage, however, it was mainly medical.

First breakthrough

It was not until 1966 that the peak of fertility was defined. This point of the cycle coincided with maximum mucus or its greatest stretchiness. Henry Burger of the Prince of Wales Hospital, Melbourne was able to verify this fact in the very first pituitary (L. H.) hormonal assay done for the N. F. P. team in 1967, coordinating, with Dr Brown, who was simultaneously measuring the ovarian hormones against the mucus pattern.

Second breakthrough

It was in 1970 when Dr Lyn Billings was invited to solve the problem of the application of the method to the premenopausal years, when a woman is losing her fertility and ovulation occurs only spasmodically. This was testified by hormonal and field tests and later Dr Lydia Sans and Dr Patricia Harrison who were able to report that 'dry days' were also fertile in the lactation period with breastfeeding mothers.¹⁵ The full scientific data on the Ovulation Method is now built up and in due time will be found in medical literature.

15. *Bulletin of Christian Affairs*, page 6, October, 1973.

The ovulation method

For the first time, there is an accurate and reliable method which tells women ahead of time when they are going to become fertile.¹⁶ Fertility in a woman is always accompanied by the secretion of a particular type of mucus from the glands of the cervix, which she is able to recognise. Every fertile woman is familiar with the symptom, often regarding it as an abnormality. Every woman can be taught to interpret correctly her own mucus pattern. Only simple observations are necessary, without the need for internal examinations, or the use of any instruments.

The changes in the physical character of the mucus not only warn her of the approach of ovulation, but can inform her of the day of maximum fertility in the cycle, which the couple can use either to achieve or postpone a pregnancy. Changes in the mucus indicate when ovulation has passed and enable her to predict the arrival of her next menstrual period.

The mucus cycle

It begins with menstruation, usually followed by a few days, variable in number, when no mucus is seen or felt. A woman gets used to perceiving the sensation at her vaginal opening; she will recognise a positive feeling of nothingness during these so called 'dry days'. As the egg begins to ripen some mucus is felt at the vaginal opening. This mucus is generally white or yellow but definitely opaque and sticky. Then the fertile mucus starts very clear like the raw egg white. The key is the feeling of wetness or lubrication. Ordinarily it requires three days of this type of slippery mucus before the egg is ready to be ovulated out of its follicle.¹⁷ The last day of the clear mucus is the peak day (spinnbarkieith type mucus). After this the mucus passes into the infertile phase of the menstrual cycle.

Two essentials for success in teaching the O. M.

- 1) The intimate detail of the mucus symptom is to be taught by women themselves to one another.

16 & 17. Klaus Hanna, M. D. *The Ovulation Method*, St. Louis University Magazine, Vol. 147, No. 3, 1974.

2) Women under instruction must keep a daily record of the cycle, i. e. a dry day, a mucus day, or a day of the period.

Billings has adopted a technique devised in Latin America using a leaflet and tiny coloured stamps, red for the period, green for a dry day, and a stamp bearing the imprint of a baby for mucus days.¹⁸

The daily record not only trains the woman in the interpretation of her own pattern, but also provides a visual record which enables the teacher to appreciate at once how well the woman has understood the instructions.

The most convincing proof of its effectiveness is the fact that thousands of women all over the world are using it successfully. Blind women, and illiterate women, easily pick up the symptoms and use the method successfully.

Statistics¹⁹

The performance of a method of family planning should be measured by several criteria, all quite different. Thus we should distinguish:-

1) *Method Failure*: In this case the couple have faithfully and correctly carried out the instructions, yet a pregnancy has occurred. All methods of preventing pregnancy have such failures. Thus, for example, sterilising operations have a failure of four per thousand. It is, of course not much consolation to the four women to be told that the operation nearly always prevents pregnancy. The failure rate of sterilising operations in men is higher.

2) *User Failure*: In this case there has been a mistake made, which may reflect a fault in the teaching. The couple have carried out the instruction as they understood them, but did not understand them correctly, and the error is apparent to the ex-

18. Billings J. J. *The O. M. Teaching Aid Leaflet and Stamps*, Advocate Press, Melbourne.

19. News Letter-Family Life Centre-Melbourne. July, 1974.

perienced person. Thus, for example, there may have been an act of intercourse on a dry day occurring within three days after the peak symptom; it is the dry day *before* ovulation which is infertile.

3) *The total pregnancy rate:* This is the measure of the motivation of a group of people to continue to use a particular method. Thus, in some series with the contraceptive pill pregnancy rates of over 20% have occurred through a failure to go on with the method according to the instructions.

Refinement of the method:

Refinement of the method with increased simplicity in its application is isolating the only objection which will remain, i. e. requirement of periodic abstinence and what man on earth will then be able to say, "I cannot accept a few days of abstinence for my wife and my family." Our group of women is assisting in a research programme designed to produce a simple and reliable tape test and there is no theoretical difficulty in such a venture. When a tape is available its real contribution will be that of making it even easier for women to understand the natural indication of fertility which is the basis of the Ovulation Method.²⁰ No condition affects the following of the method, except the contraceptive pill.

No combination of Natural Methods²¹

The fallacy that a combination of the various natural methods offers greater security than the ovulation method alone must be repudiated. The ovulation method is applicable throughout the reproduction period of life, in all circumstances. To submit it to the judgement of the temperature record would be to reduce it to the temperature method and thus prevent the solutions of the problems of the long cycles, anovular cycles, breast feeding, the pre-menopausal years, and so on. Furthermore, practical

20. Billings Evelyn. *Workshop Ovulation Method*-Sydney-Australia, July 3rd, 1973.

21. Billings, Evelyn and John J, *The Idea of the Ovulation Method*. Reprint from Australian Tamil physician Vol. 2. March, 1973.

experience over many years has shown that the "combined methods" become the temperature method, and confidence in the mucus symptom is never established because the teaching of the symptom tends to become completely inadequate. The idea of checking one method with the other proves to impose a handicap, a "check" indeed, but in the other sense of the word.

One of the gratifying results that has been obtained has been the willingness of the husbands to co-operate. There are a number of reasons for this, an important one being the appreciation by the husbands that their wives understand the method very well and feel secure in its use. Uneducated people, people living in poverty, even women who are unintelligent, can use the method successfully.

Some arguments against the natural methods of F. P.

1) Women are faced with difficulty in accepting the period of sexual continence in the middle of the cycle, a time when they feel an increased sexual urge. Hence asking them to abstain at this time of libido is unnatural:-

This has been reported in the C. M. A. C. Bulletin, that 10% of women feel an increase of libido in the mid-cycle. This has been confirmed by several independent bodies of data. The studies are as follows:

After menstruation	19.6%
Mid point of cycle	11.8%
During menstruation	0.4%
Both during and after menstruation	33.0%
No particular time	14.8%
Both before and after menstruation.....	1.2%
Both before and during menstruation....	0.4%
Unclassifiable.....	2.3%

A paper by Ferrero and La Pietra, disproves that most women experience increased libido at the time when conception is likeliest. The authors conclude "The objections along with its psychological overtones, that women are faced with difficulty in accepting the

period of sexual continence required in the middle of the menstrual cycle, must be resolutely cast aside.²²

2) Individual 'hard cases' of the drunken husband or nymphomaniac wife are not family planning problems, but show a varying degree of inadequacy in personal character or in marital relationship. Contraception as such cannot solve such problems. If such a couple can be led to accept periodic abstinence as a means of resolving family planning problems, their love and respect for one another as persons will also grow, and as it grows, it will help solve their other problems.

3) Abstinence in Marriage: Without love, the sex act is experienced as a duty and as a burden. The lack of love can gradually cause the death of marriage. Many couples need to realise that love in marriage is not confined to sex, it is no 'go' signal for sexual activity. There are couples who do testify that abstinence is an equal expression of their love. Abstinence in marriage is not single abstinence but couple abstinence, mutually agreed upon and mutually enriching. Married couples do testify that abstinence is not merely possible, but a regular feature of their married life, e. g. sickness, separation, etc. People can also be motivated to abstain during the fertile period, if they have reason for doing so. Sexual intercourse is the giving of self, a specifically human act to be chosen, postponed and moderated by reason and will. Those with a correct attitude towards sexuality will find periodic abstinence a powerful means towards the desired maturing of conjugal love.

In final contribution to Natural methods of Family Planning, one cannot keep silent about the Indian situation. There is no doubt about the need for F. P. in India. But can this need be met by the mass distribution of contraceptives? What we need is a rise in the quality of life, and this in turn will reflect on the quantity, and this is uniquely provided for by the Natural Methods of Family Planning.

To Men of Science: We wish now to express our encouragement to men of Science who "can considerably advance the welfare

22. Denis Cashman, MB, CMAC Bulletin - No. 49, Vo. 13. January 1973.

of marriage, and the family, along with peace of conscience, if by pooling their efforts they labour to explain more thoroughly the various conditions favouring a proper regulation of births."

It is particularly desirable that, according to the wish already expressed by Pope Pius XII, medical sciences succeed in providing a sufficiently secure basis for a regulation of birth founded on the observance of natural rhythms. In this way scientists and especially Catholic scientists will contribute to demonstrate in actual fact that, as the Church teaches, "a true contradiction cannot exist between the divine laws pertaining to the transmission of life and those pertaining to the fostering of authentic conjugal love" - Pope Paul in *Humanae Vitae* 1968.

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